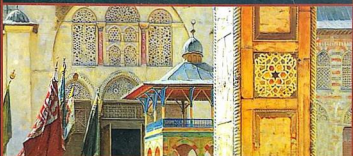


حاشية الموفق على لمعة الموفق

HĀSHIYAH AL-MUWAFFAQ 'ALĀ LUM'AH AL-MUWAFFAQ



*A commentary on Lum'ah al-I'tiqād
of Imām Muwaffaq al-Dīn Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdisī
by Shaykh Muwaffaq al-Dīn Yūsuf bin Ṣādiq al-Ḥanbalī*



AL-MADRASAH
AL-HANBALIYYAH

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

حاشية الموفق على لمعة الموفق

Hāshiyah al-Muwaffaq 'alā Lum'ah al-Muwaffaq

A commentary by

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AL-MAWALAN
AL-HANBALITEH

Transliteration Chart

ء	°	ر	r	ف	f
ا	a, ā	ز	z	ق	q
ب	b	س	s	ك	k
ت	t	ش	sh	ل	l
ث	th	ص	ṣ	م	m
ج	j	ض	ḍ	ن	n
ح	ḥ	ط	ṭ	ه	h
خ	kh	ظ	ẓ	و	w, ū
د	d	ع	‘	ي	y, ī
ذ	dh	غ	gh	ة	ḥ

° represented by double letters

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الحمد لله الذي هو كما أثنى على نفسه
فالعبد لا يحصي ثناءً على ربه
والصلاة والسلام على أفضل خلقه محمد وآله وصحبه



All praise is for Allāh as He praised Himself due to the servant's inability to
enumerate praise upon his Lord, and prayers and peace upon the best of
the creation, the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ his followers and companions.

IMÂM IBN QUDĀMAḤ AL-MAQDISĪ

His name, lineage and title

He is Muwaffaq al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad, 'Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Qudāmaḥ b. Miqdām b. Nāṣir b. 'Abd Allāh al-Maqdisī; a descendant of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. For the Ḥanābilāḥ he is Shaykh al-Madhhab, while they also refer to him as one of the Shaykhān; the other being Majd al-Dīn (d. 652H), the grandfather of Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyyah.

His birth, early years, seeking knowledge and death

He was born in Sha'bān in the year 541H., in the village of Jammā'īl, Jabal Nāblus. For the first ten years of his life he remained with his family in Palestine, and began his memorization of the Qurān. In 551H. he and his family made hijrah to Damascus, due to the Christian invasion of their lands. Whilst in Damascus, Ibn Qudāmaḥ completed his memorization of the Qurān, and in addition memorized a large number of narrations. Furthermore he memorized *Mukhtaṣar al-Khiraqī*; one of the primary texts concerning the fiqh of Imām Aḥmad. He remained in Damascus for ten years and began to journey the Islamic lands in search of knowledge around his twenties. In 561H. he travelled to Baghdad, which was considered at that time to be one of the main cities of knowledge; being the residing place of many luminaries of the time. On his journey to Baghdad he was accompanied by his maternal cousin al-Ḥāfiẓ 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Maqdisī (d. 600H); while he inclined towards the study of fiqh, his cousin inclined towards the study of hadith, nevertheless, they accompanied each other to lessons and acquired both. Ibn Qudāmaḥ remained in Baghdād for four years, and again studied *Mukhtaṣar al-Khiraqī*, but this time under the tutelage of Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (d. 561H). However, Allāh willed for the death of Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir, only fifty nights after Ibn Qudāmaḥ's arrival. He later studied under Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597H); then remained with Ibn

al-Manniyy (d. 583H). Under the guidance of his teachers he learned the fiqh of the Ḥanābilāh and its principles, excelling in them. He then returned to Damascus, before again embarking on travels to Baghdad as well as Mecca in 573H. in order to perform Ḥajj and meet other people of knowledge. After performing Ḥajj he returned to Baghdad where he remained for a year before returning to Damascus where he settled and began to author beneficial works in many branches of knowledge, one of the most famous being *al-Mughni*. Muwaffaq al-Dīn b. Qudāmah passed away on Saturday, during the day of 'Īd al-Fiṭr in 620H.

Statements of the scholars about him

He was known for his vast knowledge, wisdom, good manners and wit. He was renowned as the Scholar of the people of al-Shām of his time. Although an independent work can be dedicated to his character and knowledge, this is not the proper place to embark on such an endeavour. Here, it is sufficient to mention a few statements of the scholars regarding him.

A close relative, and scholar in his own right, Diyā' al-Dīn (d. 643H) said about him:

'He was of good manners, he would hardly be seen except that he was smiling, he would tell stories and joke. I heard Bahā' al-Dīn (d. 624H). say; "the Shaykh, during readings would joke with us and be at ease. Once they complained to him about some children who worked with him, so he said; "They are children, they have to play and you used to be just like them.'"¹

Ibn al-Najjār (d. 643H) describes him as:

'The Imām of the Ḥanābilāh in the congregational Mosque (in Damascus), trustworthy, a proof, noble of figure, extremely generous, complete in intelligences, intense in

¹ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A'lam al-Nubulā*, vol. 22, p. 171

worship, always composed, well-mannered, decent, pious, worshipping upon the statute of the Salaf, his face emitting light, and he was endowed with dignity and prestige. One would benefit from the sight of him, before even hearing his speech!²

Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728H), born only forty years after the death of Ibn Qudāmah, said: 'No one possessing more understanding of the religion entered al-Shām after al-Awzā'i (d. 157H) other than al-Shaykh al-Muwaffaq.'³

His writings

Ibn Qudāmah possessed a great amount of knowledge, deep understanding, and was a prolific writer. Due to these combined characteristics, his plentiful works; some single and others consisting of multiple volumes reached the level of excellence in knowledge; full of deep insight, contemplation and clear love for the words of Allāh the Exalted, and His Messenger ﷺ.

Ibn Rajab (d. 795H) remarks concerning this:

'Al-Shaykh al-Muwaffaq wrote many beneficial works about the (Ḥanbalī) Madhhab; it's principles and branches, in (the sciences of) hadith, language, asceticism and heart softeners. His writings in uṣūl al-dīn reach a level of high quality. Many of them (i.e. his books) being on the path of the muḥaddithīn, full of narrations from the Prophet ﷺ and reports from the Salaf and chains of narration. This was the way of Imām Aḥmad and the scholars of Narrations.'⁴

² Ibn Rajab, *Dhayl 'alā Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilāh*, vol. 3, p. 284

³ Ibn Rajab, *Dhayl 'alā Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilāh*, vol. 3, p. 286

⁴ Ibn Rajab, *Dhayl 'alā Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilāh*, vol. 3, p. 291

Lastly, some of his more famously known books will be enumerated in relation to the specific field of Islamic science. In fiqh he wrote: *al-Mughnī*, *al-Kāfī*, *al-Muqni'* and *al-'Umdaḥ*. In uṣūl al-fiqh he wrote: *Rawḍaḥ al-Nāzir*. In admonition, heart-softeners (raqā'iq), purification of the self (tazkiyah al-nafs) and taṣawwuf, he wrote: *al-Riqqaḥ wa al-Bukā*, *al-Tawwābīn*, and *Dhamm mā 'alayhi Mudda'ū al-Taṣawwuf*. Here it should be pointed out that Ibn Qudāmaḥ did not author the well-known book *Mukhtaṣar Minhāj al-Qāṣidīn*, as is wrongfully stated by certain publishers. This book was authored by Imām Aḥmad b Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Qudāmaḥ al-Maqdisī, who died in 682H. Although, he was related to Muwaffaq al-Dīn Ibn Qudāmaḥ (the author of *al-Lum'aḥ*) he died some 60 years later. In 'ilm al-ḥadith he wrote: *Mukhtaṣar al-'Ilāl al-Ḥadith li al-Khallāl*. With regards to 'aqidaḥ, it is said that he was a stern proponent of the Atharī 'aqidaḥ and during his time he was one of its central figures. He penned many beneficial works elucidating and defending the Atharī 'aqidaḥ. Including, but not limited to:

- *Al-Burhān fī Mas'alaḥ al-Qurān*,
- *Al-Širāṭ al-Mustaḳīm fī Bayān al-Ḥarf al-Qadīm*,
- *Lum'aḥ al-l'tiqād*,
- *Šifaḥ al-'Uluww*,
- *Dhamm al-Ta'wil*,
- *Taḥrīm al-Naẓar fī Kutub Ahl al-Kalām*,
- *Faḍa'il al-Šaḥābah*.

SHAYKH YÜSUF BIN ŞĀDIQ AL-ḤANBALĪ

His name, kunyah and laqab

He is Shaykh Yūsuf Muḥammad b. Şādiq al-Ḥanbalī. His kunya is Abū Muslim and his laqab is Muwaffaq al-Dīn.

Some of the scholars he studied under

Shaykh Yūsuf b. Şādiq studied under scholars from both al-Azhar University (Jāmi'ah al-Azhar al-Sharīf) and scholars outside of it; from Egypt as well as other countries. The most important of the scholars he studies under is the Grand Shaykh of the Ḥanābilah, Shaykh Dr. Muḥammad Sayyid al-Ḥanbalī, the main teacher of the Ḥanbalī madhhab in Jāmi' al-Azhar al-Sharīf. Shaykh Yūsuf also studied under Shaykh Aḥmad Ma'bad 'Abd al-Karīm, Shaykh Aḥmad 'Umar Ḥāshim and Shaykh Ḥasan al-Shāfi'i; all three being from the Higher Committee of scholars of al-Azhar al-Sharīf. He also studied under Shaykh Ashraf Makkawī, Shaykh Ḥazim al-Kilānī and Shaykh Jamāl Farūq al-Daqāq, Shaykh 'Alī Şāliḥ al-Azhari, Shaykh Rabi' al-Ghafīr, Shaykh Faṭḥī Ḥijāzi, Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥasan 'Uthmān and Shaykh Sa'd Sa'd Jawīsh. From outside of Egypt, Shaykh Yūsuf studied with the Pakistan based muḥaddith Shaykh Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Shujā' Ābādī. The Shaykh also studied worldly sciences at the Misr International University, in the faculty of Humanities/al-ʿAlsun; combining the study of linguistics, translation and English literature, the latter being the focus of his graduation thesis.

Some of the sciences and books he studied

Shaykh Yūsuf b. Şādiq studied various books and branches of Islamic knowledges under the aforementioned scholars. What follows is a general, yet far from complete summary. Under Shaykh Dr. Muḥammad Sayyid al-Ḥanbalī he studied *Sharḥ al-Kawkab al-Munir* in uṣūl al-fiqh (he also studied this book with Shaykh Ashraf Makkawī), and in Ḥanbalī

fiqh he studied *Bidāyah al-Ābid*, *Akhṣār al-Mukhtaṣarāt*, *Hidāyah al-Rāghib Sharḥ 'Umdah al-Ṭālib*, *Kashshāf al-Qinā'*. In ḥadīth, he studied *Musnad Imām Aḥmad* with Shaykh Dr. Muḥammad Sayyid al-Ḥanbalī, as well as *Sharḥ al-Kharidāh al-Bahiyyah* in 'ilm al-kalām, and *Lum'ah al-I'tiqad* and *Qalā'id al-Iqyān* in Ḥanbalī 'aqīdah, and also grammar (nahw), rhetoric (balāghah) and logic (mantiq). Shaykh Yūsuf also studied logic under Shaykh Hazim al-Kilānī and Shaykh Ḥasan al-Shāfi'i, who taught him from *Mi'yār al-'Ilm*. The latter also taught him ḥadīth and taṣawwuf. With Shaykh Aḥmad Ma'bad 'Abd al-Karīm he studied *Tadrib al-Rāwī* in muṣtalāh al-ḥadīth, as well as *Fath al-Mughit Sharḥ Alfīyyah al-ḥadīth*. With Shaykh Jamāl Farūq al-Daqāq he studied 'ilm al-kalām. Under Shaykh Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Shujā' Ābādī he studied *Musnad al-Shāfi'i* and *al-Muwaffa'* in ḥadīth. He also studied ḥadīth under Shaykh Sa'd Sa'd Jāwīsh. Apart from studying grammar with Shaykh Dr. Muḥammad Sayyid al-Ḥanbalī, Shaykh Yūsuf also studied *al-Ajrumiyyah*, *Sharḥ al-Makūdī* and parts of *Qaṭr al-Nadā* under Shaykh 'Alī Ṣāliḥ al-Azhari, as well as *Sharḥ Ibn 'Aqīl 'alā Alfīyyah Ibn Mālik* under Shaykh Rabi' al-Ghafir. Other books in grammar and morphology (ṣarf) were studied under Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥasan 'Uthmān.

His ijāzāt

Apart from having specific ijāzāt in various books, Shaykh Yūsuf b. Ṣādiq also holds general ijāzāt in the Ḥanbalī madhhab, which he received from Shaykh Dr. Muḥammad Sayyid al-Ḥanbalī⁵ and Shaykh Dr. Walid al-Manisī al-Ḥanbalī⁶, the president of the Islamic University of Minnesota and a senior member of the Permanent Fatwa Committee of the Assembly of Muslim Jurists in America (AMJA). Shaykh Yūsuf b. Ṣādiq also received general ijāzāt⁷ from the Grand Shaykh of the Shāfi'i

⁵ Shaykh Dr. Muḥammad Sayyid al-Ḥanbalī himself holds various general ijāzāt in the Ḥanbalī madhhab. He received ijāzāt from the late Saudi Shaykh of the Ḥanābilah 'Abd Allāh b. 'Aqīl al-Ḥanbalī, as well as the mufti of the Ḥanābilah in Duma Syria, Shaykh Aḥmad al-Dūmī and the Egyptian scholar Shaykh 'Abd al-Razzāq Khafājah al-Ḥanbalī.

⁶ For more information on Shaykh Dr. Walid al-Manisī, visit:
<https://www.amjaonline.org/scholars/dr-waleed-al-maneese-ph-d/>

⁷ An ijāzah is a license given by someone who possesses authority in a specific text, subject, branch of knowledge, to someone who studied under him; indicating that this person is

madhhab, 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Shahāwī, Shaykh Muḥammad Mahanā, Shaykh Muḥaddith Ismā'il al-Daftār and Shaykh Mu'awaḍ 'Awaḍ Ibrāhīm; who was a hundred-and-four years of age, may the *Raḥmah* of Allāh be upon him.

His teaching posts

Shaykh Yūsuf b. Ṣādiq holds an official teaching post at Madrasah Shaykh al-'Amūd, teaching various Islamic sciences such as Ḥanbalī fiqh, ḥadīth and tafsīr. He is also the main teacher of the Ḥanbalī Madrasah online platform, which provides both short and long-term online courses, in both the Arabic and English languages, in subjects such as uṣūl al-fiqh, fiqh, 'aqīdah and ḥadīth. Outside teaching, the shaykh has also worked as an English interpreter. His Islamic and worldly studies, coupled with his work and fluency in Arabic and English mean he is aptly qualified to teach the Islamic sciences to an English-speaking audience.

authorized to transmit and teach a certain text or subject. When one holds a general ijāzah in a madhhab, it means that someone is deemed overall qualified, by someone who himself possesses both authority and general qualification, to teach and transmit from every branch of knowledge and book within that particular madhhab. Thereby, his knowledge is considered of such high standard that he can transmit and teach without him having necessarily studied each and every book.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Remarks on al-Lum'ah: themes, organization and contextualization

The book *Lum'ah al-I'tiqād*, which is by far the most widely known contribution of Ibn Qudāmah to the field of 'aqīdah, is the main focus of this work. It deals with various topics of 'aqīdah, such as sunnah in opposition to bid'ah (innovation), qaḍā' (Divine decree) and qadar (pre-ordainment), issues concerning imān (faith), the ru'yāh (seeing) of Allāh, the Messenger ﷺ and his Companions (Ṣaḥābah), interaction with rulers, orthodoxy in opposition to heterodoxy, and the relationship between ijtihād and taqlid. Apart from these themes, this work is for the larger part dedicated to elucidating the correct belief with regards to two main topics. The first being Allāh and His Attributes (ṣifāt)⁸ and the correct approach to the texts that make mention of these Attributes, the enumeration of some of these texts, and the stance and approach that luminaries of the first generations took in this regard. The second being, the *Kalām*⁹ of Allāh and the reality of the Qurān. Approximately half of *al-Lum'ah* is concerned with these two topics and others directly related to them.

When browsing through *al-Lum'ah*, it becomes apparent that the topics contained within it are not the most well-organised, especially when compared with more structured books of 'aqīdah. For example, the author inserts a discussion on the People of the Qiblah, and the continuous nature of Ḥajj and Jihād in between a passage relating to the companions and the wives of the Prophet ﷺ. It could be argued that these issues would be better suited in the section concerned with obedience to the ruler and leadership. The organisation of the book

⁸ A conscious choice has been made to only transliterate the Attributes of Allāh, and their related verbal forms, into English, instead of substituting them with the English translation; this is in order to obey the prohibition to do so. It must be stressed however, that the proposed translations given, are only related to the Arabic word in the context of human speech and their understanding. Therefore, the proposed English word is not to be understood as a direct translation of the Attribute of Allāh, as the meaning in relation to Allāh is unknown.

⁹ *Kalām* can be translated as 'speech'.

however, does not detract from the content and the importance of the book whatsoever, and it remains to this day succinct and easy to understand. It is written in a straightforward manner, absent of difficult theological terminologies, clearly informing the reader what is required to be known in order for one to be truly upon the orthodox Ḥanbalī-Atharī 'aqīdah.

Most books concerned with the Atharī 'aqīdah up to the time of Ibn Qudāmah, discuss the same topics as mentioned above with little variation. However, this must not be taken to mean that the author of a particular work only holds the beliefs mentioned in his book or that he differs in belief with another author who mentioned different issues. On the contrary, most books of 'aqīdah were written as a reaction to erroneous beliefs prevalent during the time of the author, or in order to provide answers to questions put forward to the author by individuals and groups. Therefore, books of 'aqīdah present not only the 'aqīdah that their authors found to be correct, but also shine light upon the historical context in which the books were written. This subsequently resulted in the variation found in works of 'aqīdah and in the importance each author allocated to a particular issue, and it is in this context that the books on Atharī 'aqīdah must be viewed and understood. In the time of Ibn Qudāmah there was fierce opposition between different schools of thought resulting in debates, exclusive behaviour and even clashes between individuals and groups of opposing schools. The tone was often harsh and polarizing and in some cases driven by political motives and this poured over into the written works as well. It is extremely important to keep this context in mind when reading classical books of 'aqīdah, regardless of the author or school of thought the book belongs to. An appreciation of this context means that not all the statements of an author, regarding other groups and individuals, can or should be applied uncritically in the modern day; and this approach should also be taken into account when studying *al-Lum'ah*.

The nature of the book is such that it is not in need of a detailed or lengthy explanation (*sharḥ*) which attempts to clarify difficult concepts or terminologies. Hence a short, to-the-point commentary (*ḥāshiyah*) suffices in order to grasp the full meaning of the book. Especially, a commentary which seeks to convey and expound the intent of the original author; i.e. a concise commentary from a Ḥanbali-Atharī perspective, that explains this classical Ḥanbali-Atharī text in such a way that will aid the original author in conveying his message, while facilitating the reader with getting acquainted with the text. This text is by no means in need of a commentary that aims to present or promote ideas and convictions that the author did not hold, nor is the original work of the author in need of being used as a mere tool or springboard to establish such goals. Unfortunately, this is exactly what has been the case with most translations and commentaries of the book, especially during recent times. Various Salafī groups have tried, on more than one occasion, to explain the book in a way that does not agree with what Ibn Qudāmah wanted to convey.

What is striking is that in general, these groups and individuals appreciate and follow what Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Qayyim (d. 751H) stated, yet, they fail to understand and follow a very important point that the latter put forward regarding the method of explaining texts. In *Ilām al-Muwaq'fin*, he states on more than one occasion that when an author states something in his book(s), and one (e.g. the translator or explanator) knows that the author meant a certain thing by it, he or she should not attempt to change that particular meaning by explaining away the authors intended meaning or changing it to something that fits his own personal opinion or agenda. Rather, one should try to keep as close to what the author stated as possible. Following other than this method of explaining texts, is a form of intellectual dishonesty. If someone disagrees with an author he should either author an original work himself, in which he can convey what he wants, or, when explaining a particular point in which one disagrees

with the author, the point should be kept intact and transmitted honestly, and only afterwards should the disagreement be mentioned along with its reasoning. This can be placed either in the text of the commentary, whilst making it clearly distinct from the original text, or by use of footnotes. However, he should leave the original text and its intended meaning, in all cases, intact.

A number of Salafi oriented commentaries of *Lum'ah al-I'tiqad*, currently on the market, which have been translated into English and other languages, do not adhere to this concept of respecting the authors intentions. What one ends up with is a book which used to contain the original Ḥanbali-Athari 'aqidaḥ, that is changed and distorted through its commentary and is eventually presented as Salafi 'aqidaḥ. To confuse the general reader even more, even the term Athari 'aqidaḥ is hijacked to make the work appear authentic, although in reality the Athari 'aqidaḥ is not synonymous with Salafi 'aqidaḥ. In contrast to this, it is the intent of this current work to present the true Ḥanbali-Athari 'aqidaḥ put forward in *al-Lum'ah*, and accompany it with a commentary that will facilitate and aid the reader in better understanding the text from this perspective, as explained by one of the qualified Ḥanbali scholars of Egypt. It is hoped that with this effort, Muslims will rediscover *al-Lum'ah*, as intended by the author himself i.e. from a Ḥanbali and Athari perspective.

Text and commentary: the structure of the book

In order to stay as true as possible to the original text, the following structure is maintained. Firstly, for complete transparency and to aid those intending to memorize the text, the reader is presented with the vowelized Arabic text. In order to keep footnotes at a minimum, no references have been given for the Arabic text. Secondly, after each passage from the Arabic text, the English translation is presented. As the aim is to minimize usage of footnotes in the Arabic and its translation, only references to the Qurānic āyāt have been given. Finally, the commentary is presented according to a traditional ḥāshiyah-style,

and this is done to break away from the usual structure of English commentaries of Arabic texts, which rely on masses of footnotes which can, in some cases, exceed several pages and surpass the length of the original text. These footnotes detract from the reading experience and cause it to be fragmented rather than flowing naturally through the text and commentary. This style has also been selected to pay homage to the classical method of explaining Islamic texts, which apart from being an intellectual endeavour, also endowed the texts with an aesthetic dimension present throughout the whole work, which included rhyming titles, organic and easy-flowing text with commentary, and adornments in margins. With the *ḥaṣhiyah*-style, the commentary is made an integral part of the text and in this work differentiating the commentary from the actual text is done simply by presenting the original text in **bold** and inserting the commentary between brackets [...].

In presenting the commentary, the intention is to make it flow naturally with the text it explains, by using additional words at times. Only in some instances is there a clear distinction between the original text and the commentary. While a conscious choice was made to avoid the use of footnotes for the Arabic and translation, full notes are given for the commentary. These include references for all *āyāt*, narrations and quotations. Only in rare cases could a reference to a specific source not be found, however these have been indicated where necessary. Some additional information is also given in the footnotes regarding particular points, but only when it was felt that doing so would improve the reader's understanding.

Before commencing with the actual text and its commentary, a few points must be mentioned in order to further contextualise the work and give a general outline of the science of *'aqlidāh*, providing the student a clear perspective while reading and studying the text. Due to their importance, these points will be discussed below as four separate chapters.

AN IMPORTANT DISCUSSION CONCERNING THE SALAF AL-ŞĀLIḤ AND AHL AL-ḤADĪTH

The Salaf al-Şāliḥ (the Pious Predecessors) are the three preferred generations that were praised by the Prophet ﷺ in his statements: *'The best people are those of my generation, then those who come after them, then those who come after them. Then, there will come people after them whose testimony precedes their oaths and their oaths precede their testimony.'*¹⁰ Although this statement appears to be clear, there has however been scholarly discussion regarding who exactly is included within the 'best generations'. This, mostly stems from disagreement surrounding the definition of the word 'generation' (qarn). It has led some to consider a generation to be a period of time spanning a hundred years. Subsequently, this group of scholars considered the Salaf al-Şāliḥ as those who lived within the first three hundred years of Islamic history i.e. from 0 to 300 hijri; and this opened up the possibility of more than three individuals succeeding each other. Others defined generation more conventionally, i.e. a number of people succeeding those before them, and therefore considered a generation as one individual or a specific group of individuals.

Although, the former definition is good, as it includes all the famous imāms like Abū Ḥanīfah (d. 150H), Mālik (d. 179H), al-Shāfi'i (d. 204H) and Aḥmad (d. 241H), it must be noted however, that amongst the people living during these three generations, were innovators and deviants. For example, those who persecuted and tortured Imām Aḥmad (i.e. the Mu'tazilah), such as Ibn Abī Du'ād (d. 240H). An additional problem is that various people and groups seek to include or exclude others from this definition. For example, some will try to include 'Uthmān al-Dārimī (d. 280H) from amongst the Salaf al-Şāliḥ, yet according to others he was a mujassim¹¹. It therefore appears that there is a problem with the practicality of this definition as the criteria for including someone

¹⁰ Al-Bukhārī no. 6429 / Muslim no. 2533

¹¹ A mujassim is someone who has fallen into anthropomorphism and regards or depicts Allāh in such fashion. For example, one who holds the belief that Allāh is actually seated on the Throne, or that Allāh is a body comprising of different parts i.e. resembling created bodies.

from among the Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ varies from one group to another, and as a result, who the Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ actually are may vary from people to people. Therefore, it is better to keep the term Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ away from the discussion related to 'aqidaḥ, and not use the term 'aqidaḥ al-Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ, or even 'aqidaḥ Salafiyyah for that matter, but instead use the term 'aqidaḥ Ahl al-Ḥadith instead. Thus, it is clear that developing a single definition by which one can determine who the salaf are is problematic and results in disputes.

Unfortunately, this term and its variations are often used argumentatively to force a certain belief on someone out of guilt and make one's opponent fear any disagreement. When it is said that such-and-such is the opinion of the Salaf, the majority of people would fear to disagree with it, and as a result simply submit to it. However, as previously pointed out, the Salaf consists of a range of different individuals, with some being trustworthy (thiqah) and upright (ādil), while others were weak (da'if) and even corrupt or open sinners (fusāq). According to the science of ḥadith, all the of the companions were upright and trustworthy, however the same is not the case with those who came after them. Therefore, anyone from the subsequent generations is individually assessed to determine whether he or she is trustworthy or not.

As previously stated, use of the term Ahl al-Ḥadith is more appropriate than the term Salaf al-Salih and therefore we are concerned here with the 'aqidaḥ of Ahl al-Ḥadith, or more specifically the Athari 'aqidaḥ. When looking at prominent individuals who belong to Ahl al-Ḥadith, the best representative is surely Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. During the time of the miḥnah (inquisition)¹², there was a dispute between two parties namely the Mu'tazilah, represented by Ibn Abi Du'ād, and Ahl al-Sunnah, represented by Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. There were of course others who stood against the Mu'tazilah, but ultimately it was only Imām Aḥmad who did not submit to the demands of the inquisitors, and as a result endured physical and mental torture at the hands of his

¹² It refers to the period of state-imposed inquisition, which started in 218H, lasting around fifteen years and ended in 233H.

persecutors. The ordeal that he experienced cemented his role as the leader and defender of the 'aqidah of Ahl al-Ḥadīth; and naturally this was carried by his direct students and the ones who followed them, eventually this 'aqidah became known as the Ḥanbalī or Atharī 'aqidah. For this reason, in some prominent Ash'arī books such as *al-Mawāqif* and *al-Maqāṣid*, there is found reference to a group of people they call Ahl al-Ḥadīth al-Ḥanābilāh. This indicates that it is possible that one can be Shāfi'ī in fiqh, yet Ḥanbalī in 'aqidah (if they ascribe themselves to the Atharī 'aqidah). Furthermore, this proves that the Ḥanābilāh are Ahl al-Ḥadīth, for even the Ash'arīrah who disagreed with them consider them to be Ahl al-Ḥadīth. If this is understood, it is known that when 'aqidah al-Ḥanābilāh is mentioned, it refers to the 'aqidah of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal who is the best representative of Ahl al-Ḥadīth, and it is synonymous with the Atharī 'aqidah.

DETAILING THE 'AQĪDAH OF THE ḤANĀBILAH

Various books can be consulted and studied in order to obtain the authentic 'aqidah al-Ḥanābilah (or Athari 'aqidah). From the classical books of the early (mutaqaddimin) phase of the Ḥanābilah, the most important is: *Uṣūl al-Sunnah* authored by Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal himself¹³. In addition, *Sharḥ al-Sunnah* by al-Barbahārī (d. 329H) and *al-Haṭṭiyah* by Ibn Abi Dawūd (d. 316H) can be consulted. The latter should perhaps best be studied with the explanation of Al-Safārīnī (d. 1188H), titled *Lawā'ih al-Anwār al-Saniyyah*. However, due to its advanced nature it should not be engaged with during the beginning or intermediate level of study. Al-Qāḍī Abū Ya'lā (d. 458H), considered to be the last of the early phase, also authored important works on 'aqidah, such as *Mukhtaṣar al-Mu'tamad fi Uṣūl al-Dīn* and *Ibṭāl al-Ta'wīlāt*.

From the middle (mutawassitīn) phase the poem *al-Qaṣidah al-Dāliyyah* by al-Kalwadhānī (d. 510H) and *al-Iqtīṣād fi al-T'riqad* by 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Maqdisī are considered sound and important reference materials. Also, from this period is the famous *al-Lum'ah* of Ibn Qudāmah which is considered a well-established starting point¹⁴.

¹³ Most other books on the 'aqidah of Imām Aḥmad are attributed to him only, and his authorship of them is not firmly established. While some scholars do regard them as being his, others question his authorship. Therefore, it is best to limit oneself to the aforementioned book (i.e. *Uṣūl al-Sunnah*). In line with this, the authenticity of *Kitāb al-Sunnah* of 'Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad has also been called into question and should not be used as a primary source for studying the Ḥanbali 'aqidah. It should be pointed out that this does not mean that these are books deprived of benefit as they do contain sound material. Yet, they should be used with caution, and it perhaps may be more pertinent to use them as secondary study materials.

¹⁴ The works on 'aqidah authored by Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597H), who is considered to be a scholar from the middle phase of the Madhhab, do not represent the correct Ḥanbali 'aqidah, as he is not consistent in his approach, mixing between the 'aqidah of the Ḥanābilah and Ash'arīrah. Also, one should not concern himself with the books of Ibn Taymiyyah (and his student Ibn al-Qayyim and others who propagated their school of thought in matters of 'aqidah) when studying in order to grasp the official Ḥanbali 'aqidah. Although, considered one of the four major Ḥanbali scholars in fiqh (i.e. Ibn Qudāmah, Majd al-Dīn, Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī), his opinions in 'aqidah are not decisive and are only selectively considered. Therefore, one should best take from other sources such as Ibn Qudāmah and al-Kalwadhānī, or the later day scholars who are in line with them, such as Ibn Balbān and 'Abd al-Bāqī.

Books from the later (muta'akhhirin) phase include *al-'Ayn wa al-Athar* by 'Abd Al-Bāqī (d. 1071H) and *Qalā'id al-Iqyān* by Ibn Balbān (d. 1083H), which is the summary of *Nihāyah al-Mubtadi'in* by Ibn Ḥamdān (d. 695H) whose book in 'aqīdah is an important work in its own right. More advanced level books include those of al-Safārīnī, such as *Lawāmi' al-Anwār* and *Lawā'iḥ al-Anwār* (which is the aforementioned commentary of *al-Hā'iyah*)¹⁵, however his books are very advanced containing difficult, and sometimes vague phraseology and laborious terminology. Therefore, it is perhaps best to not engage with these works until a thorough grasp of the subject matter has been attained, and instead it may be more beneficial to engage with the more accessible summary authored by Ḥasan al-Shaṭṭī (d. 1348H); entitled *Mukhtaṣar Lawāmi' al-Anwār*. Another advanced level text is the book *al-Aqāwīl al-Thiqāt* by Mar'i b. Yūsuf al-Karmī (d. 1033H).

¹⁵ These two books should not be confused, although they have very similar titles. *Al-Lawāmi'* is the explanation of al-Safārīnī to his own shorter poem in 'aqīdah, titled *al-Durrah al-Madiyyah*; while *al-Lawā'iḥ* is his explanation to the poem of Ibn Abi Dawūd.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SCHOOLS OF 'AQĪDAH

Many scholars from the latter generations state that Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah comprises of the Ḥanābilah, Ashā'irah and Māturidiyah. This is plainly stated by the Ḥanbali scholars 'Abd al-Bāqī in *al-'Ayn wa al-Athar* and al-Safārīnī in *Lawāmi' al-Anwār*¹⁶. However, during earlier phases of Hanbali scholarship, e.g. the time of Ibn Qudāmah, this was not the case. Ibn Qudāmah did not consider the Ashā'irah from Ahl al-Sunnah, and he spoke very harshly against them, this being evident in *al-Lum'ah* and other works. It is understood however, that the social and political circumstances in which he lived played a critical role in shaping the way scholars from different theological schools interacted with each other. The domain of 'aqidah was often characterised by fierce debates, mutually exclusive attitudes and hostilities between partisans from different theological schools, e.g. the Ashā'irah and the Ḥanābilah. With changes in these underlying factors, especially in later times, there was also a change in the mutual interaction and tolerance towards one another, resulting in more and more Ḥanbali scholars disagreeing with the strict approach of Ibn Qudāmah and others towards the Ashā'irah.

In general, the Ashā'irah accept the 'aqidah of the Ḥanābilah and vice versa, except for a disagreement concerning the Attributes of Allāh and the concept of *ta'wil* relating to them, which the Ḥanābilah strongly reject. Apart from this, they disagree with the Ḥanābilah on some other issues, although these are less severe in nature. This however, is not the place to delve into these, at times nuanced, differences, for the main focus is explaining the text of *al-Lum'ah* and providing a proper exposition of the Athari 'aqidah¹⁷. With regards to the Ashā'irah and the Māturidiyah

¹⁶ 'Abd al-Bāqī in *al-'Ayn wa al-Athar*, p. 53 / al-Safārīnī in *Lawāmi' al-Anwār al-Bahiyah*, vol. 1, p. 292

¹⁷ This commentary is geared towards the novice and intermediate or general Muslim who wants to grasp the Athari 'aqidah and its basic tenets. At this level one should avoid delving into the differences between various groups and their representations of issues in 'aqidah. One should also avoid occupying himself with studying more than the basic issues of the 'aqidah he is committed to. This also means that at times the way an issue is handled and

and the differences between their positions in 'aqidah; these are less in number and even more nuanced when compared to the differences between the Ḥanābilāh and the Ashā'irāh (and the Māturidiyāh for that matter). Their differences, however, are too advance to be discussed here and are outside the intent of the present commentary. Thus, for the sake of simplicity, these theological schools will be considered as one. Therefore, when it is said in this commentary that the Ḥanābilāh disagree with the Ashā'irāh, it is implied that they generally disagree with the Māturidiyāh also. However, if a particular position of the Ashā'irāh is stated, it does not necessarily mean that the position is shared with the Māturidiyāh. Furthermore, this book should not be used as a reference for the differences between the Ḥanābilāh and the Māturidiyāh, as the latter were never the main focus of the Ḥanābilāh unlike the Ashā'irāh who have always represented the larger and more prevalent group from the various schools of Kalām.

It is important to note that the Ḥanbali 'aqidah, which has historically been called the Athari 'aqidah, is not synonymous with the contemporary Salafi 'aqidah which is often erroneously labelled as such. The Salafi 'aqidah as is the case with the other theological schools, has a distinct approach when it comes to the Attributes of Allāh. Additionally, they too disagree with the positions of the Ḥanābilāh on other points of 'aqidah. However, as stated previously, expounding these differences is not the focus of this work.

presented in the commentary is less nuanced than it actually is, as the aim of this work is to provide a general understanding or framework. Once a student has grasped the basics, the study can be advanced by adding more detailed issues, nuances and differences of opinions to his understanding. This progressive method is a tried and tested method of studying that ensures the student is gradually exposed to more advanced and often complex issues. This approach to studying is applied across the board, holding true for various Islamic sciences such as: 'aqidah, fiqh and hadith. Finally, and perhaps an obvious point, the study of 'aqidah or any other science for that matter, should be carried out under the supervision of a qualified teacher. It should in no way be an individual undertaking as studying without a qualified teacher inevitably leads to errors in one's understanding.

IJTIHĀD VS TAQLĪD

Allāh said: *'and ask the people of knowledge...'*¹⁸, indicating that taqlid in matters of fiqh is permissible. However, where matters of 'aqidaḥ are concerned, one has to acquire Shahādaḥ (belief with evidence) and attain certain knowledge (yaqīn). Taqlid, in this case, would only give probable knowledge (ẓann) and results in one following the opinion of another without knowing the evidence behind it. Simply put, there is no taqlid in matters of 'aqidaḥ.

This is contrary to what most of the modern-day Salafi groups propagate, by claiming that there is taqlid in 'aqidaḥ and ijtiḥād in fiqh. Furthermore, it is stressed that everyone is required to believe according to his own ijtiḥād in the primary issues of 'aqidaḥ, such as the oneness of Allāh, Him having no children, partners or parents, and Him having created and originated all of creation. In all these basic issues there is no excuse for someone to resolve to taqlid, instead ijtiḥād should be resorted to in order to arrive at certain belief based on evidences. However, particular issues that Allāh did not require his creation to know, are not included and ijtiḥād in these matters is not required; instead making taqlid of a qualified scholar in such a case is sufficient and can be resorted to.

With the above stated, one might wonder how a relied upon position (mu'tamad) can exist in Ḥanbalī 'aqidaḥ when taqlid in primary matter has already been censured. The answer to this is that the relied upon position did not originate from taqlid, instead it developed through the individual ijtiḥād of prominent scholars of the Ḥanābilāḥ, who eventually reached the same conclusions. This is illustrated by al-Suyūṭī (d. 911H), when he mentioned that he never followed al-Shāfi'ī (d. 204H) (i.e. he did not do taqlid of the Shāfi'ī madhhab) instead he performed ijtiḥād and found himself agreeing with the imām in all but a few issues.

Hence, there is a clear difference between agreeing on something after the process of ijtiḥād, leading one to a particular conclusion, and

¹⁸ Qurān 16:43

following an opinion without knowing the evidence behind it (i.e. taqlid). Making ijtihad in 'aqidah and reaching the same conclusions Imām Aḥmad reached is not particularly difficult, as the number of issues related to 'aqidah are relatively few when compared to fiqh and therefore the probability of arriving at the same result is much higher.

THE CHAIN OF LUM'AH AL-'ITQĀD

فضيلة العلامة شيخ الحنابلة محمد السيد الحنبلي قال:

ومن فوائد التلقي على الشيوخ لا من الصحف: إحياء سنة التلقي وسنة الإسناد ومعرفة آباءك في العلم واختصار الوقت وتعلم الأدب وتسدید الفهم فإذا خلصت نيتك في تعليم العلم بعد هذا أو ناظرت صاحب بدعة أو قمت لأمر من أمور الشريعة فتحرکت تحرکت معك سلسلة الشيوخ غيرة على ابنهم البار ونصرة لورث النبوة وما يعقلها إلا العالمون.

The virtuous Shaykh, the 'allāmāh, Shaykh al-Ḥanābilāh Muḥammad al-Sayyid al-Ḥanbalī said:

'From the benefits of taking knowledge from shuyūkh instead of books is: the revival of the sunnah of taking knowledge from a shaykh and the sunnah of the chain (of narrators), knowing your fathers in knowledge¹⁹, shortening time spent, learning manners and correcting understanding. Then, if you have a sincere intention to teach knowledge after this (i.e. having learned and obtained a chain), or debate an innovator, or start doing things from the sharī'ah matters, and move towards this, then the chain of shuyūkh, with solicitude for their good son, supporting him,

¹⁹ Shaykh Muḥammad Sayyid is referring to the famous and well-known notion amongst scholars, in which they express that a student may consider, and refer to his teacher/shaykh as his father. In this sense, the chain of scholars is seen as a chain of father figures one has, connecting him to each subsequent scholar in the chain before him; so one's shaykh is his father, and his shaykh is the grandfather, and the shaykh before that is the great grandfather, and so on, going back to a particular scholar or even the Prophet ﷺ himself. Saying such a thing is not considered an innovation or the speech of Sufis, for Allāh has stated in the Qurkūn: 'The Prophet is more worthy of the believers than themselves, and his wives are their mothers' (Qurān: 33:6), and this makes the Prophet ﷺ their father, in a figurative sense. In addition, the Prophet ﷺ himself has stated with regards to knowledge that he is as a father, for he said: *I am to you like a father; I teach you.*, as narrated by Abū Dawūd, no. 8, and others. All this however, does not mean that a real tie of kinship is established or laws of inheritance are applied.

moves with you²⁰, because he is the heir of prophethood²¹ and no one understands this except the intelligent.’

With these beautiful and beneficial words in mind, what follows is the presentation of the complete Ḥanbalī chain of *Lum'ah al-Fiqh* as narrated from Shaykh Muwaffaq al-Dīn Abū Muslim Yūsuf b. Ṣādiq al-Ḥanbalī; and he said:

أخبرني الشيخ حاتم الأنصاري الحنبلي قال أخبرني شيخ الحنابلة محمد السيد الحنبلي أخبرنا الشيخ عبدالله بن محمود بن محمد السيد الدومي الشاذلي الحنبلي، قال: حدثنا به والدي المحدث الفقيه الشيخ محمود السيد بن محمد السيد الدومي الحنبلي، عن شيخه مصطفى بن أحمد الشطبي الحنبلي، عن أبيه أحمد الشطبي الحنبلي، عن العلامة حسن بن عمر الشطبي الحنبلي، عن مصطفى بن سعد الرحباني الحنبلي، عن محدث الشام محمد بن أحمد السفاريني الحنبلي عن شيخه التلي عن قنوة الحنابلة في زمانه علما وعملا أبي عبد الله محمد بن بدر الدين البلياني الصالح في الصالحة من الشام صاحب فرائد العقيان وكتب سلسلته فقال: أروي الفقه والطريقة القادرية وغيرهما مما يجوز لي وعني روايته عن شيخ الإسلام الشهاب أحمد بن علي الوفايي المفلحي عن شرف الدين موسى بن سالم الحجواي وعن القاضي برهان الدين بن مفلح وهما عن والده نجم الدين بن مفلح عن والده القاضي شمس الدين صاحب الفروع عن الشيخ تقي الدين بن تيمية عن شمس الدين ابن أبي عمر عن عمه شيخ الإسلام موفق الدين ابن قدامة المقدسي.

²⁰ The possessor of the chain should envision this 'moving of the chain of shuyūkh' when he is debating, teaching or doing something from the shar'ah, as if his fathers are present with him, backing him, supporting him, and strengthening him.

²¹ Abū Dawūd, no. 3641, al-Tirmidhī, 2683, and others narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: 'The scholars are the heirs of the Prophets, and the Prophets leave neither dinar nor dirham, leaving only knowledge, and he who takes it takes an abundant portion.'

حاشيةُ الموفقِ على لُمعَةِ الموفقِ

Hāshiyah al-Muwaffaq 'alā Lum'ah al-Muwaffaq

THE AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

قَالَ الشَّيْخُ الْإِمَامُ الْمُؤَيَّدُ الدِّينُ أَبُو مُحَمَّدٍ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ قُدَّامَةَ
الْمَقْدَسِيِّ رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى :

Imām Muwaffaq al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad
b. Muḥammad b. Qudāmah al-Maqdisī, may Allāh, the Exalted, have
mercy on him, said:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْمُحْمَدِ بِكُلِّ لِسَانٍ، الْمَعْبُودِ فِي كُلِّ زَمَانٍ، الَّذِي لَا يَخْلُو مِنْ عِلْمِهِ
مَكَانٌ، وَلَا يَسْغُلُهُ شَأْنٌ عَنْ شَأْنٍ، جَلَّ عَنِ الْأَشْيَاءِ وَالْأَنْدَادِ، وَتَقَرَّرَ عَنْ الصَّاحِبَةِ
وَالْأَوْلَادِ، وَنَقَذَ حُكْمُهُ فِي جَمِيعِ الْعِبَادِ، لَا تُثَمِّلُهُ الْعُقُولُ بِالتَّفَكِيرِ، وَلَا تَقْوِّمُهُ الْقُلُوبُ
بِالتَّصَوُّيرِ، «لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ»، لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى وَالصِّفَاتُ
الْعُلَى، «الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى» • لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا
وَمَا تَحْتَ الثَّرَى • وَإِنْ تَجَهَّرَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَإِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ وَأَخْفَى»، «أَخَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ
عِلْمًا»، وَفَهَرَ كُلَّ مَخْلُوقٍ عِزَّةً وَحُكْمًا، وَوَسَّعَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ رَحْمَةً وَعِلْمًا، «يَعْلَمُ مَا تَرَى
أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِهِ عِلْمًا»، مُوصُوفٌ بِمَا وَصَفَ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ فِي كِتَابِهِ
الْعَظِيمِ، وَعَلَى لِسَانِ نَبِيِّهِ الْكَرِيمِ.

In the name of Allāh, *al-Raḥmān, al-Raḥīm*.

All praise is due to Allāh, the one praised by every tongue, worshipped
at every time, there is no place that is free from His *Ilm*, nor does one
affair preoccupy Him over another. He is far beyond any equal or
rival, as well as being free of the need for a wife or children. His rule is
executed over all of His servants. No intellect can derive an example of

Him with pondering, nor can the heart attempt to depict Him. *There is nothing equal to Him, and He is al-Sami, al-Basir*²². To Him belong the best of Names and most exalted Attributes. *'al-Rahmān did istawā over the Throne. To Him belongs what is in the heavens and the earth, and what is between them, and what is under the ground. And if you speak aloud, then verily, He ya'lamu the secret and that which is yet more hidden. Allāh, there is no god but He. To Him belong the best of Names.*'²³ His 'Ilm encompasses everything. He subjugates all creatures by His 'Izza and rule, and His Raḥmah and 'Ilm encompass everything. *'He ya'lamu what is before them, and what is behind them, while they do not encompass it with knowledge.*'²⁴ He is described with what He has attributed to Himself in His Magnificent Book and upon the tongue of His honourable Prophet.

Commentary: The Author's Introduction

In the name of Allāh, al-Raḥmān²⁵, al-Raḥīm²⁶

All praise is due to Allāh, the one praised by every tongue, worshipped at every time, there is no place that is free from His 'Ilm²⁷ [meaning: His 'Ilm is everywhere. Yet, while His 'Ilm is everywhere, He, *bi-Dhātihi*²⁸, is not everywhere. Saying He is everywhere *bi-Dhātihi*, is a grave mistake and leads one to anthropomorphism (tajsīm), and this may be kufr (disbelief)²⁹. So, when asked where Allāh is, the correct response is to say: Allāh is *fi al-samā'*³⁰, while He is everywhere with His 'Ilm], **nor does one affair preoccupy Him over another. He is**

²² Qurān 42:11

²³ Qurān 20:5-8

²⁴ Qurān 20:110

²⁵ Raḥmān can be translated as 'merciful'.

²⁶ Raḥīm can be translated as 'compassionate'.

²⁷ 'Ilm can be translated 'knowledge'.

²⁸ *Bi-dhātihi* is often translated as 'with his essence'.

²⁹ It must be pointed out that an innovation (*bid'ah*) leading to kufr (disbelief) may instead be *fiṣq* (abhorrent sin). This is dependent upon the one committing the act or holding a belief being a mujtahid or a muqallid. If one's *ijtihād* leads him to such an act or belief, it is kufr; when done out of following a mujtahid, it is considered *fiṣq*.

³⁰ *Fi al-samā'* is often translated as: above the Heavens, however, this must not be understood as Allāh being in a physical direction, nor should it be taken in such a way that the heavens encompass Him by translating it as 'in'. Allāh's refuge is sought from that. It is better in all cases to stick to the Arabic wording: Allāh is *fi al-samā'* or Allāh *fi al-samā'*; as per the text

far beyond any equal or rival, as well as being free of the need for a wife or children. His rule is executed over all of His servants. No intellect can derive an example of Him with pondering, nor can the heart attempt to depict Him [for one cannot ever imagine how Allāh is. All Muslims are agreed upon the reality of His *Dhāt*³¹ being unknown. Hence, if this is the reality of His *Dhāt*, then it must also be the reality of His Attributes. For, it is known that attributes are related to the essence of something that they are attributed to. Therefore, when one does not know the reality of the essence, one does not know the reality of the attribute(s) either. It is however possible that a result or something related to a particular attribute is understood, for example the *Raḥmān*³² of Allāh indicates that He will forgive and not punish. Yet, the reality of the attribute itself (e.g. *Raḥmān*) cannot be described or defined, for it cannot even be imagined in the mind]. ***There is nothing equal to Him*** [in His comparison], ***and He is al-Samīʿ, al-Baṣīr***³³ [restricting oneself to saying *al-Samīʿ*³⁴, *al-Baṣīr*³⁵ as it is prohibited to translate Allāh's Names or Attributes³⁶. Consequently, one should use the Arabic words such as: *Yad*³⁷, *Wajh*³⁸, *Sam*³⁹ and *Baṣr*⁴⁰ and avoid the use of their translations in other languages, instead resorting only to transliteration. ***To Him belong the best of Names and most exalted Attributes. 'al-Raḥmān istawā'***⁴¹ ***over the Throne. To Him belongs what is in the heavens and the earth, and what is between them, and what is under the ground. And if you speak aloud, then verily, He yaʿlamu***⁴² ***the secret and that which is yet more***

³¹ *Dhāt* can be translated as 'essence (of something)'.

³² *Raḥmān* can be translated as 'mercy'.

³³ Qurān 42:11

³⁴ *Samīʿ* can be translated as 'hearing'.

³⁵ *Baṣīr* can be translated as 'seeing'.

³⁶ See, 'Abd al-ʿAzīz al-Zimzīmī, *Manẓūmah al-tafīr wa 'ulūm al-Qurān*, lines 15-16. These lines are concerned with the Qurān in general. If this is the case with the Qurān in general, then it is even more applicable to the Attributes in particular. The prohibition of translating the Attributes of Allāh is the chosen opinion of Shaykh Yūsuf b. Ṣādiq al-Ḥanbalī.

³⁷ *Yad* can be translated as 'hand'.

³⁸ *Wajh* can be translated as 'face'.

³⁹ *Sam* can be translated as 'hearing'.

⁴⁰ *Baṣr* can be translated as 'sight'.

⁴¹ *Istawā* can be translated '(he) rose'.

⁴² *Yaʿlamu* can be translated '(he) knows'.

hidden. Allāh, there is no god but He. To Him belong the best of Names.⁴³ His ʾIlm encompasses everything. He subjugates all creatures by His ʾIzzah⁴⁴ and rule, and His Raḥmah and ʾIlm encompass everything. He yaʾlamu what is before them, and what is behind them, while they do not encompass it with knowledge.⁴⁵ He is described with what He has attributed to Himself in His Magnificent Book and upon the tongue of His honourable Prophet.

⁴³ Qurān 20:5-8

⁴⁴ ʾIzza can be translated as 'might/power'.

⁴⁵ Qurān 20:110

THE OBLIGATION TO ACCEPT THE ĀYĀT AND AHĀDĪTH RELATED TO ALLĀH'S ATTRIBUTES

وَكُلُّ مَا جَاءَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ أَوْ صَحَّ عَنْ الْمُصْطَفَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مِنْ صِفَاتِ الرَّحْمَنِ وَجِبَ الإِيمَانُ بِهِ وَتَلَقِّيهِ بِالتَّسْلِيمِ وَالْقَبُولِ، وَتَرْكُ التَّعَرُّضِ لَهُ بِالرَّدِّ وَالنَّاقِلِ، وَالتَّشْكِيبِ وَالتَّمْيِيلِ. وَمَا أَشْكَلَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَجِبَ إِثْبَاتُهُ لِقَطْعًا، وَتَرْكُ التَّعَرُّضِ لِمَعْنَاهُ، وَتَرْكُ عِلْمِهِ إِلَى قَائِلِهِ، وَتَجَعُّلُ عَهْدَتِهِ عَلَى نَاقِلِهِ، أَتْبَاعًا لِعَرَفِي الرَّايِسِيِّينَ فِي الْعِلْمِ، الَّذِينَ أَتَى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ فِي كِتَابِهِ الْمُسِينِ بِقَوْلِهِ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى: ﴿وَالرَّايِسِيُّونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا﴾، وَقَالَ فِي ذِمِّ مُتَّبِعِي التَّأْوِيلِ لِمُعْشَاهِ تَنْزِيلِهِ: ﴿وَفَأَنَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فُتِنُوا بِمَا نَسَاهُ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾، فَجَعَلَ ابْتِغَاءَ التَّأْوِيلِ عِلَامَةً عَلَى الزَّيْغِ وَفَرَنَهُ بِابْتِغَاءِ الْفِتْنَةِ فِي الذِّمِّ، ثُمَّ حَجَبَهُمْ عَمَّا أَمَلُوهُ، وَقَطَعَ أَسْمَاعَهُمْ عَمَّا قَصَدُوهُ، بِقَوْلِهِ سُبْحَانَهُ: ﴿وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾.

Everything that has come in the Qurān and that is authentically narrated from al-Muṣṭafā ﷺ concerning the Attributes of *al-Raḥmān*; it is obligatory to have faith in it and receive it with submission and total acceptance. We must abandon opposing it with rejection (al-radd), false interpretation (ta'wil), comparison (tashbih) and making examples (tamthil). As for what appears unclear, then we are obligated to affirm its wording and abandon opposing to its meaning. And we refer knowledge thereof to the One who stated it, and we entrust it to the one who transmitted it, following the example of those who are firmly grounded in knowledge; those whom Allāh has praised in His manifest Book, with His saying, free of imperfections and Exalted is He: *'And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: We believe in it; the whole of it is from our Lord.'*⁴⁶ And Allāh says, while blaming and criticizing those who seek interpretation of the unclear *āyāt* of His revelation: *'As for those in whose*

⁴⁶ Qurān 3:7

hearts there is a deviation, they follow that which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking mischief (*fitnah*) and seeking for its hidden meanings, but no one knows its hidden meaning except Allāh⁴⁷. Thus, Allāh made the seeking of hidden meanings a sign of deviation. And He has, in dispraise of it, equated it with seeking after mischief. Then, He placed a barrier between them and that which they aspire to, and He cuts off their ambition from what they seek after, by His saying, free of imperfections is He: *but no one knows its hidden meaning except Allāh*.⁴⁸

Commentary: The Obligation to Accept the Āyāt and Aḥādīth related to Allāh's Attributes

Everything that has come in the Qurān is accepted by Muslims, for it has come by way of mutawātir aḥādīth; meaning, it is narrated by such a large number of individuals that it is inconceivable that they would have agreed upon a lie. This, from the perspective of the sharī'ah gives certainty] **and that is authentically narrated from al-Muṣṭafā** ﷺ [regarding this, Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī (d. 716H) stated that: 'the texts (i.e. the Qurān and ḥadīth) concerning the Attributes are of three levels: 1) authentic (ṣaḥīḥ), whose authenticity is agreed upon by the scholars of ḥadīth; 2) weak (da'if), whose weakness is agreed upon (by the aforementioned scholars); 3) those that are differed over with regards to their acceptance (i.e. some considering them weak while other considering them authentic). With respect to the first, it is with what the Attributes can be affirmed with; while the second and third are not considered in this issue⁴⁹. Thus, anything authentically reported from the Prophet ﷺ that gives certainty must be accepted, for in primary matters of 'aqīdah there is no reliance on that which does not give certainty. This however does not mean that only the mutawātir aḥādīth give certainty, thereby excluding the *aḥād* narrations. For the latter can give certainty, if certain conditions are met such as: the acceptance by the vast majority

⁴⁷ Qurān 3:7

⁴⁸ Qurān 3:7

⁴⁹ Al-Ṭūfī, *Al-Intisārāt al-Islāmiyyah*, vol. 2, p. 702.

of scholars (e.g. *ahād* narrations mentioned in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* works of al-Bukhārī and Muslim), or the narrators in its chain being of very high standing (e.g. a ḥadīth narrated by Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, from al-Shāfiʿī, from Mālik, from Nāfiʿ (d. 117H), from Ibn ʿUmar (d. 83H). Also, when the narration is well-known (*mashhūr*) according to its technical meaning⁵⁰, it may lead to certainty, although this is not necessarily the case. These are additional traits, amongst others, that could give certainty, or may let it reach that level; however, since the primary concern of this work is 'aqīdah, further and more detailed discussion regarding the sciences of ḥadīth are not appropriate here. It is sufficient to know in general that *ahād* ḥadīth should be further investigated to ascertain whether certain characteristics are present in order to determine whether certainty can be established through them, and if they are therefore suitable to be used in primary issues of 'aqīdah] **concerning the Attributes of al-Raḥmān**⁵¹ [from the specific wording used by the author, it is

⁵⁰ It should be pointed out that there is a difference between the technical (*iṣṭilāḥī*) and non-technical (*ghayr iṣṭilāḥī*) meaning of well-known (*mashhūr*). The technical meaning, which is assigned by the scholars of ḥadīth is: the report that has three or more narrators at every level of its chain. Shaykh Yūsuf favours the opinion that it should be at least four narrators on every level.

⁵¹ Ibn 'Aqīl (d. 513H) stated with regards to the Attributes (and the original text is in **bold**, while the commentary of Shaykh Muwaffaq al-Dīn Yūsuf b. Ṣādiq is between brackets [...]):

One does not affirm an Attribute, upon which one's believe is, except by decisive (clear-cut) evidence, (that is) either: 1) a text from the Book of Allāh; 2) or the mutawātir Sunnah of His Messenger; [and in what follows Ibn 'Aqīl gives examples of *tawātur* transmission] **which the Muslims [meaning, the scholars] have agreed on transmitting** [although, practically it is nearly impossible to find this type of *tawātur*]. Nonetheless, theoretically, this would be the highest level of *tawātur*, **or the majority of them (agreed)** [i.e. the scholars. And this type is below the aforementioned level, and more commonly occurring, such as the ḥadīth: 'Whoever tells a lie against me intentionally then surely let him occupy his seat in the Hellfire,' and it was reported by more than one-hundred Companions; and the scholars from all eras], **or those who are not allowed to lie - from amongst the trustworthy (thiqāt)** [the righteous individuals who have a good memorization] **whose 'aqīdah is sound** [having the trustworthy as reporters in the chain is not a condition for *tawātur*. So, if a disbeliever relates something, and the number is overwhelming, to the extent that it is impossible for them to have agreed upon a lie, then the statement is accepted; due to it being *mutawātir*. Although, it is as if Ibn 'Aqīl, through this specific statement of his, wants to convey that he does not accept this fact with regards to 'aqīdah. Thus, matters of 'aqīdah are only accepted when it comes from those who are *thiqāh* and have sound 'aqīdah]; **or 3) the consensus of the Ummah about evidence that they were certain about** [and consensus is of two types: the first is the type that takes its value from the agreement of all the scholars on a specific thing; and the second is the type of consensus that takes its value from the Qurān and Sunnah. For example, the obligation

understood that he specifically meant issues concerning the Attributes of Allāh. So, these reports need to be authentic and give certainty. In other issues of 'aqidaḥ one may accept something which does not give (complete) certainty. For example, describing details regarding Paradise using aḥādith that are less than authentic, i.e. not reaching the level of certainty. Consequently, belief in Paradise and some of its blessings are proven with certainty, while other blessing and specific details may not be; **it is obligatory to have faith in it and receive it with submission and total acceptance** [because it contains things which cannot be understood as Allāh did not want us to understand it (fully)]⁵².

of prayer, and it is not obligatory due to the consensus of scholars (which is the first type of consensus that is mentioned), but instead it is obligatory because evidences from the Qurān and Sunnah indicate its obligation clearly; and Ibn 'Aqil referred to this second type of consensus] or 4) **logical proof (which gives certainty)** [when it comes to matters of 'aqidaḥ, one requires certainty, and this is gained by each one of the four mentioned evidences; including logical proofs. By logical proof it is meant, one ponders and considers the universe and reaches the conclusion that Allāh exists; that He is the One whose existence is obligatory and necessary (wājib al-wujūd). And if He is as such, than He is al-'Alīm, and al-Ḥayy; and these are in fact Attributes. The mind can independently conclude these Attributes amongst others, without the need for a text, yet it cannot independently conclude and know that He is Samī' or has a Yad or a Wajh, as with regards to these Attributes, which are often termed the reported Attributes (ṣifāt khābariyyah), the mind is dependent on the Qurān and Sunnah]. **By other than these (aforementioned) ways, it is not possible to affirm an Attribute of Allāh, Exalted is He.** [Thus it is impermissible to affirm them] **through analogy (qiyāḥ); the opinion of one of the companions; or the opinion of some scholars in an era, while other scholars did not approve; or a āḥād report, that has not been received by the whole Ummah of scholars with acceptance** [meaning, they did not approve of it and did not accept it as evidence]. **But rather, it is like that (which we have stated), because other than these four types of evidence, meaning: 1) the Book of Allāh, 2) the mutawātir Sunnah of His Messenger, 3) consensus of the Ummah and 4) logical proof, do not give certainty nor are they decisive (clear-cut); rather they establish probable practices** [which are related to fiqh, and uṣūl of 'aqidaḥ is not a part of this]. **The Attributes of Allāh, Exalted is He, cannot be affirmed based on probability or preponderance of probability (ghalabah al-ẓann); as is the case with His Dhāt, Exalted is He** [and the speech concerning His Attributes, is a branch of the speech concerning His Dhāt. Which in essence means, that which is true for the Dhāt, is also true for His Attributes. For example, if His Dhāt is pre-existent (qadīm), then His Attributes are also pre-existent as well. So, if the existence of Allāh cannot be accepted based on probability (ẓann), then likewise it is not accepted for His Attributes] **which cannot be affirmed with this** [meaning, these ways other than the four approved ways mentioned above]. **It is not permissible (and possible) to establish (and proof) it** [i.e. His Dhāt and Attributes] **with this** [i.e. probable evidence (dalīl al-ẓannī)].

⁵² In *Tahrīm al-Nazar*, p. 51, Ibn Qudāmah says: 'We do not need to know the meanings of what was intended by Allāh, the Exalted, from His Attributes, Mighty and Majestic (is he). Indeed, He did not intend regarding them any action, nor did He connect to them any responsibility

In this regard Ibn 'Abbās said: *There is nothing in this life similar to what is in paradise, except by the names*⁵³; meaning, when one enters paradise, one will not find anything other than the names of things. For example, one will see things that are called milk (laban) or honey ('asl), yet they will be completely different from what one knew to be milk and honey in this worldly life. If our knowledge and realisation is insufficient to know and understand things in Paradise which are created, then this is even more the case when it concerns knowing and understanding Allāh and His Attributes. Therefore, willing submission and total acceptance regarding the Attributes is required; and everyone is obligated to believe, submit and accept, from the layman who cannot read and write to the erudite scholar]. **We must abandon opposing it with rejection (al-radd), false interpretation (ta'wil), comparison (tashbih) and making examples (tamthil). As for what appears unclear** [meaning, what is unclear or not obvious (mutashābih) in its meaning⁵⁴], **then we are obligated to affirm its wording and abandon opposing to its meaning** [by explaining it or giving a meaning to it. Thus, the author says that when there is something that appears unclear or difficult to understand, one should approve of the wording and abandon exposing oneself to the meaning⁵⁵. One should not expose himself to the trial of

aside from believing in them. The belief in them, without knowledge of their meaning is possible; and, indeed, belief with ignorance is correct. Certainly, Allāh, the Exalted, ordered belief in His angels, His books, and His messengers, and what is revealed to them; even if we do not know from that except the names.'

⁵³ Al-Tabari, *Jami' al-Bayān*, vol. 1, p. 416, under the explanation of Qurān: 2: 25.

⁵⁴ Ibn Qudāmah mentions in his book in uṣūl al-fiqh, titled *Rawḍah al-Nāzir*, vol. 1, p. 215, that the āyāt of the Attributes are from the category of the mutashābih (ambiguous/unclear). He states: 'And the correct opinion is that the mutashābih āyāt, that had been revealed concerning the Attributes of Allāh, Glorified is He, are obligatory to believe in and it is prohibited to seek their interpretation, such as statement of Allāh, the Exalted: 'al-Rahmān did is istawā over the Throne' (Qurān, 20:5), 'Rather, His Yadd are widely outstretched' (Qurān, 5:64), '...which I created with My Yadayy...' (Qurān, 38:75), 'And there will remain the Wajh of your Lord' (Qurān, 55:27), 'Sailing under Our A'yūn' (Qurān, 54:14) and similar to them. The Salaf, may Allāh have mercy upon them, agreed on affirming them, passing over them as they came, and leaving the interpretation of them. For, indeed Allāh, Glorified is He, has censured the seekers of their interpretation and paired them, in His censuring, with those who seek discord and named them 'the People of Deviation.'

⁵⁵ With the phrase: 'we are obligated to affirm its wording and to abandon opposing to its meaning'; the author states quite clearly that the affirmation of the Attributes of Allāh is upon their wording and that their meanings are consigned to Allāh. In footnote 52, a quote from

explaining it, and in the case one feels confused about something due to its being unclear, then the right course of action is to believe in the wording, refer the knowledge of its meaning to Allāh, and move on]. **And we refer knowledge thereof** [it must be stressed that this does not mean that the Ḥanābilāh say that these words do not have a meaning. On the contrary, they do have a meaning, although it is not known to us. The idea that 'referring knowledge back to Allāh', or what is commonly understood as relegation and in Arabic is termed *tafwīd*, implies that one is convinced that these words do not have meaning and are like a random collection of letters is erroneous. No scholar ever claimed that this is the intended meaning of *tafwīd*, except for Ibn Taymiyyah, who perhaps misunderstood the madhhab of certain scholars in this regard. He conceived this incorrect understanding and contemporary Salafi scholars unfortunately followed him in this. However, it is not as he states, for the word *Yad* has a meaning; but it is not the literal meaning of the word that is known to men, and the meaning is only known by Allāh.

It is important here to address the difference between the *tafwīd* approach as propagated by the Ḥanābilāh, and the *ta'wīl* approach of the Ashā'irah. These two different approaches to the Attributes of Allāh essentially reject the claim that one should understand and affirm the literal meanings or the actual realities of the specific words denoting Allāh's Attributes. This claim is problematic, for if one sticks to the literal meanings of these words, or their actual realities, it would result in assigning qualities of created beings to Allāh; and this is prohibited. The Ḥanābilāh refute anyone who approves and claims that the literal meanings of these words, in the various āyāt and aḥādīth, are Attributes of Allāh. With this in mind, the crucial question remains: 'what did Allāh then mean by words like *Yad* and *Wajh*'?

One would assume that an answer to such a crucial question is complex and intricate, yet the opposite is true. The position of the Ḥanābilāh concerning these matters is simply that they do not know

Ibn Qudāmah has been mentioned that states that the meanings are unknown, indicating that the meaning should be referred back to Allāh. This all helps to qualify what the author meant whenever he states (throughout his books) that the Attributes are to be considered upon their apparentness (*ẓāhir*). It appears that his intent with this word 'apparent' is the 'apparent wording' and not the 'apparent meaning'.

what is meant by them. However, there are certain groups from the Ashā'irah and other groups and sects, who state the opposite. They claim to know what Allāh intended with these specific words, and assign meanings to them. Although, the Ḥanābilah say one cannot know for sure what is meant by these specific words, they do say there is a probability that Allāh meant such-and-such with an *āyah*; thereby understanding the general meaning of the *āyah* as a whole. For instance, regarding the Attribute of *Yad*, Allāh says: '*Nay, both His Yād are widely outstretched*'³⁶. The Ḥanābilah believe in this without knowing the meaning of what Allāh intended by the word *Yad*; all the while rejecting the literal meaning of it, and not assigning and specifying a metaphorical meaning. Nonetheless, they understand that the whole *āyah* indicates that Allāh owns everything, to the extent that Allāh can give anyone whatever he wants and needs.

This approach, which is the approach of the Ḥanābilah, is also one of the opinions found within the madhhab of the Ashā'irah. Another famous approach held by the Ashā'irah, which is most common amongst them now, is the usage of *ta'wīl tafṣīlī*, i.e. detailed interpretation, with regards to the words denoting the Attributes³⁷, and this is the type of *ta'wīl* that the Ḥanābilah deem prohibited. In this approach the Ashā'irah will say, for example, that by *Yad*, Allāh meant His *Qudrah*³⁸ or His *Irādah*³⁹, depending on the context in which it is said. Thus, they will not confine themselves to the approach of the Ḥanābilah (i.e. *tafwīd*), and assign a probable meaning of which they admit they are not sure whether it is the right one or not.

³⁶ Qurān: 5:64

³⁷ As is clear from the above explanation, it is incorrect to view the Ashā'irah as a madhhab that only propagates one specific approach to the Attributes. In its broadest sense there is a clear visible historical dichotomy, dividing the Ash'ari madhhab into an early and later school of thought. Within these two schools there is a clear difference in the approach to the Attributes of Allāh, whereby the latter school made *ta'wīl tafṣīlī* (detailed interpretation), i.e. the mainstream approach of their school. Despite this view being mainstream amongst the Ashā'irah, there still exists variations in approach to the Attributes within their school, ranging from using only *tafwīd*, to mixing between *tafwīd* and *ta'wīl tafṣīlī* depending on the Attribute in question, to using *ta'wīl tafṣīlī* exclusively. For the sake of brevity, only the two main approaches within the Ash'ari madhhab are presented. One should keep in mind that this is a very generalised and basic presentation of the Ash'ari madhhab;

³⁸ *Qudrah* can be translated as 'ability'.

³⁹ *Irādah* can be translated as 'will'.

Thus, when it comes to the different approaches concerning the Attributes; there are in reality two types of ta'wil. The first type is ta'wil ijmalī, i.e. general interpretation, which is the same as tafwīd. It is rejecting the literal meaning of an attribute, affirming that the word in that specific context denoting the Attribute has a metaphorical meaning, and stating that the metaphorical meaning is unknown; therefore, one should refrain from specifying or assigning it. Moreover, stating that it has a metaphorical meaning, means on the one hand that it is not merely a meaningless word, while on the other hand it rejects the literal meaning⁶⁰. For, if the literal meaning is rejected, and it is not meaningless (i.e. random letters put together), then it should be a metaphorical meaning because there is no other viable option left. The second type is ta'wil tafsilī, and it is rejecting the literal meaning of an attribute, affirming that the word in that specific context denoting the attribute has a metaphorical meaning, which is then further specified (based on its context).⁶¹ This latter type of ta'wil is favoured by a large number of Ash'arī scholars, whilst being strongly prohibited by the Ḥanābilah] to **the One** [meaning, Allāh] **who stated it** [so, He knows best], **and we entrust it to the one** [meaning, the Prophet ﷺ] **who transmitted it** [and even he ﷺ did not know the reality of Allāh and His Attributes, and this is because he ﷺ is a part of the creation, and his nature is different from the nature of the Creator. A question may be asked whether the reality of Allāh and His Attributes will eventually be known in paradise; however, the answer to this question is in the negative. There are many things that will eventually be known in paradise, in addition to what we know now, yet, because our 'nature' will not change in paradise (i.e. we still be a part of the creation), there still exists a fundamental difference between the creation and the Creator. For as long as this difference

⁶⁰ the literal meaning would be the meaning as related to created beings, i.e. the meaning of a word as understood in the context of the created world, and this has preceded earlier in the commentary.

⁶¹ Ibn Qudāmāh wrote a small treatise titled *Dhamm al-Ta'wil* in which he brought many narrations from the Salaf, as well as his own arguments, in condemnation of this detailed type of ta'wil. It should not be understood from the title of this booklet, that Ibn Qudāmāh condemned ta'wil in general, for he only targeted those groups and individuals who used ta'wil to give a specific meaning to the Attributes.

remains, we will not know and understand the reality of Allāh, and in extension His Attributes as well; for the created cannot encompass the Creator], following the example of those who are firmly grounded in knowledge; those whom Allāh has praised in His manifest Book, with his saying, free of imperfections and exalted is He: *'And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: We believe in it [meaning the clear and unclear āyāt]; the whole of it is from our Lord.'*^{62,63} And Allāh says, while blaming and criticizing those who seeks interpretation of the unclear āyāt of His revelation: *'As for those in whose hearts there is a deviation, they follow that which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking mischief (fitnah) and seeking for its hidden meanings, but no one knows its hidden meaning except Allāh'*⁶⁴ [this āyah effectively blocks any hope that one may have with regards to knowing the meanings of the Attributes of Allāh. Furthermore, this also implies that it is prohibited to translate the Attributes of Allāh into other languages. As, when translating, one is essentially interpreting, and therefore attempting to understand the (hidden) meaning. Such a person is blamed and criticized by Allāh, as is mentioned in the above āyah. It should however be noted that translating the Qurān is a matter of scholarly dispute: some stating permissibility, whilst others prohibiting it. However, when it concerns the Attributes of Allāh specifically it should be unequivocally prohibited and no one should oppose this, as Allāh's Attributes are something that we do not understand.

Essentially, there are two different reasons for the prohibition of translation. The prohibition to translate the Qurān in general, because

⁶² Qurān: 3:7

⁶³ Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī (d.795H) stated something similar to Ibn Qudāmah in *Ikhtiyār al-ʿUlā*, p. 40-41: 'As for what the Prophet ﷺ attributed to his Lord, Mighty and Majestic is He, with what he described Him with; then everything the Prophet ﷺ attributed to his Lord, Mighty and Majestic is He, is true and sincere; it is obligatory to believe in and confirm it, just like what Allāh attributed to himself; accompanied with the negation of making examples for it. Whoever finds difficulty in understanding something of this and finds them confusing should say like those praised by Allāh, the Exalted; the firmly rooted in knowledge; about whom it is reported (in the Qurān) that they say concerning the mutashābih āyāt: 'We believe in it, all of it is from our Lord'. Just as it was said by the Prophet ﷺ with regards to the Qurān: 'Whatever you are ignorant of, then leave it to its knower'. Narrated by Imām Aḥmad, al-Nasā'ī, and other then them.'

⁶⁴ Qurān: 3:7

one is comparing his own way with the way of the Qurān, by giving an interpretation of the meaning of an āyah. When it comes to the Attributes specifically, it is not permitted to translate, because the science of translation does not allow the translation of something without understanding the source language (and that which is translated). Yes, the source language is Arabic but the reality of Allāh and His Attributes are not known in that language, therefore they cannot be translated into another language]. **Thus, Allāh made the seeking of hidden meanings** [for example, by saying *Yad* means His *Qudrah*] **a sign of deviation. And He has, in dispraise of it, equated it with seeking after mischief. Then He placed a barrier between them and that which they aspire to, and He cuts off their ambition from what they seek after, by His saying, free of imperfections is He: but no one knows its hidden meaning except Allāh.**⁶⁵

THE WAY OF THE IMĀMS OF THE SALAF CONCERNING ALLĀH'S ATTRIBUTES

قَالَ الْإِمَامُ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ حَنْبَلٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ فِي قَوْلِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَنْزِلُ إِلَى سَمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا»، وَ «إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُرَى فِي الْقِيَامَةِ»: وَمَا أَشْبَهَ هَذِهِ الْأَحَادِيثَ: (نُؤْمِنُ بِهَا وَنُصَدِّقُ بِهَا لَا كَيْفَ وَلَا مَعْنَى وَلَا نَرُدُّ شَيْئًا مِنْهَا، وَنَعْلَمُ أَنَّ مَا جَاءَ بِهِ الرَّسُولُ حَقٌّ، وَلَا نَرُدُّ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَلَا نَصِفُ اللَّهَ بِأَكْثَرِ مِمَّا وَصَفَ بِهِ نَفْسَهُ، بَلَا حَدٍّ وَلَا غَايَةٍ، «لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ». وَنَقُولُ كَمَا قَالَ، وَنَصِفُهُ بِمَا وَصَفَ بِهِ نَفْسَهُ، لَا تَتَعَدَّى ذَلِكَ، وَلَا يَتَلَفَعُ وَصْفُ الْوَاصِعِينَ، نُؤْمِنُ بِالْقُرْآنِ كُلِّهِ مُحْكَمِهِ وَمُتَشَابِهِهِ، وَلَا نُزِيلُ عَنْهُ صِفَةً مِنْ صِفَاتِهِ لِشَتَاغَةِ شُغْتِ، وَلَا تَتَعَدَّى الْقُرْآنَ وَالْحَدِيثَ، وَلَا نَعْلَمُ كَيْفَ ذَلِكَ إِلَّا بِتَصَدِيقِ الرَّسُولِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَتَثْبِيتِ الْقُرْآنِ).

Imām Abū 'Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, may Allāh have mercy on him, said concerning the saying of the Prophet ﷺ: 'Verily, Allāh yanzilu to the heaven of this world (i.e. the lowest heaven)' and 'Verily, Allāh will be seen on the Day of Resurrection' and what is similar to these narrations: 'We believe in it and testify to the truthfulness of it, without explaining 'how' and without 'meaning', nor do we reject anything of it. We know that whatever the Messenger ﷺ came with is the truth; we do not reject anything from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, nor do we describe Allāh with more than what He has described Himself with, without any limit nor any boundaries. *There is nothing equal to Him, and He is al-Samī', al-Baṣīr.*⁶⁶ We say as He said and describe Him with what He described Himself with, nor do we go beyond this. The descriptions of those who attempt to describe Him cannot grasp Him. We believe in all of the Qurān, the muḥkam (clear and decisive) and mutashābih (unclear). We do not reject

⁶⁶ Qurān: 42:11

any of His Attributes due to them appearing repulsive. We do not go beyond the Qurān and the narrations, and we do not know how to understand them, except through the truthfulness of the Messenger ﷺ, and the affirmation of the Qurān.'

قَالَ الْإِمَامُ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ إِدْرِيسَ الشَّافِعِيُّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: (آمَنْتُ بِاللَّهِ وَبِمَا جَاءَ عَنْ اللَّهِ عَلَى مُرَادِ اللَّهِ، وَآمَنْتُ بِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ وَبِمَا جَاءَ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ عَلَى مُرَادِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ).

Imām Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: 'I believe in Allāh and what has come from Allāh, in accordance with the meaning that Allāh intended. And I believe in the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and what has come from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, in accordance with the meaning that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ intended.'

وَعَلَى هَذَا دَرَجَ السَّلَفُ وَأَيْمَةُ الْخَلَفِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ، كُلُّهُمْ مُتَّفِقُونَ عَلَى الْإِقْرَارِ، وَالْإِثْبَاتِ لِمَا وَرَدَ مِنَ الصِّفَاتِ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَسُنَّةِ رَسُولِهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، مِنْ غَيْرِ تَعَرُّضٍ لِتَأْوِيلِهِ.

This was the way pursued by Salaf as well as the imāms of the Khalaf (later generations), may Allāh be pleased with them. All of them being in agreement with acknowledgement (iqrār), passing over (imrār), and affirming (ithbāt) what has been mentioned in the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ concerning the Attributes, without turning to ta'wil.

Imām Abū 'Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241 H), may Allāh have mercy on him, said concerning the saying of the Prophet ﷺ: *'Verily, Allāh yanzilu to the heaven of this world (i.e. the lowest heaven)' and 'Verily, Allāh will be seen on the Day of Resurrection'* and what is similar to these narrations: **'We believe in it and testify to the truthfulness of it, without explaining 'how' and without 'meaning'** [this is a famous saying of Imām Aḥmad. He, like the rest of the pious Salaf, did not delve into the details of matters that should just be believed in and not be deeply questioned or discussed. That is to say, Imām Aḥmad would refuse to give any 'meaning' or 'howness' in matters concerning the Attributes. A simple way of explaining the statement of Imām Aḥmad 'no how and no meaning' (lā kayf, wa lā ma'nā) would be that he refused to give the 'howness' because he did not know the 'meaning'. In truth, the statement by Imām Aḥmad is very clear and to say that by 'no meaning' he meant: 'no meaning other than the meaning that is known', then this is ta'wil and the intentional twisting of his words], **nor do we reject anything of it. We know that whatever the Messenger ﷺ came with is the truth; we do not reject anything from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, nor do we describe Allāh with more than what He has described Himself with** [therefore, if Allāh attributed *Yad* and *Wajh* to Himself, than one ought to believe in it and leave it at that. This is in itself a clear rejection of the Ash'ari method of ta'wil tafsiḥi for Allāh did not state that His *Yad* meant *Qudrah*, otherwise He would have made this clear], **without any limit nor any boundaries. 'There is nothing equal to Him, and He is al-Samt', al-Baṣī'**⁶⁷ **We say as He said and describe Him with what He described Himself with nor do we go beyond this. The descriptions of those who attempt to describe Him cannot grasp Him. We believe in all of the Qurān, the muḥkam (decisive) [meaning, which is clear and self-explanatory] and mutashābih (unclear) [meaning, that which may have more than**

⁶⁷ Qurān: 42:11

one possible meaning, like the āyāt that mention Attributes]. **We do not reject any of His Attributes due to them appearing repulsive** [one has to believe in the Attributes as Allāh meant, believing in the meaning that is known to Allāh alone and not known to anyone other than Him]. **We do not go beyond the Qurān and the narrations** [meaning, one does not seek knowledge and understanding of the Attributes of Allāh elsewhere, for example through ijtihād, logic or philosophy], **and we do not know how to understand them** [meaning, the Attributes], **except through the truthfulness of the Messenger ﷺ, and the affirmation of the Qurān.**⁶⁸

Imām Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi'i, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: 'I believe in Allāh and what has come from Allāh [meaning the Qurān, and relating to this chapter, the Attributes of Allāh in particular], **in accordance with the meaning that Allāh intended** [thereby rejecting any other interpretation or meaning that may be given to it by way of ta'wil tafṣilī, distortion (taḥrīf), logical or philosophical deduction, and the like]. **And I believe in the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and what has come from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ** [meaning, the aḥādīth], **in accordance with the meaning that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ intended**'⁶⁹ [in these statements there is a clear refutation of those who reject and resort to ta'wil tafṣilī, comparison, negation (ta'til) and making examples].

This was the way pursued by Salaf⁷⁰ [meaning, the great imāms

⁶⁸ This saying of Imām Aḥmad: 'We believe in it and testify to the truthfulness of it, without explaining 'how' and without 'meaning...'; is narrated from Ḥanbal b. Ishāq (d. 273H). Although well-known, it has some variation; some are longer than others, and some have slightly different wording; yet all carry the same meaning. They are mentioned by Ibn Qudāmah in *Dhamm al-ta'wil*, no. 33; Qāḍī Abū Ya'la in *Ibtāl al-ta'wilāt*, vol. 1, no. 9; and Ibn Baṭṭāh al-'Ukbarī (d. 387H) in *al-Iḥnāḥ*, vol. 7, no. 50, who reports it via 'Abd Allāh b. Ḥanbal (d. 290H), instead of Ḥanbal b. Ishāq. Another version of the narration of Ḥanbal b. Ishāq, that slightly differs in wording, is mentioned by al-Lālikā'i (d. 418H) in *Sharḥ Uṣūl Fiqḥ*, vol. 2, no. 777, stating: *'bilā kayf, wa lā ḥadd*.

⁶⁹ The same is also mentioned by Ibn Qudāmah in, *Dhamm al-Ta'wil*, no. 89, and in his *Iḥnāḥ Ṣifāḥ al-Uluww*, p. 24.

⁷⁰ In his small treatise *Dhamm al-Ta'wil*, p. 9, no. 6-8, he says regarding the madhhab of the Salaf: 'The madhhab of the Salaf, Allāh's *Raḥmah* be upon them, is belief in the Attributes of Allāh, the Exalted, and His Names, with what He described Himself with in His āyāt and His revelation; or (with what he was described with) on the tongue of His messenger; without adding to them, nor detracting from them, nor exceeding them, nor giving them explanation

from amongst them, for 'Salaf' is a general and broad term including people from different ranks and standing as was discussed in the general introduction] as well as the imām of the Khalaf (later generations), may Allāh be pleased with them. All of them being in agreement with acknowledgement (iqrār), passing over it (imrār) [meaning, one should accept these narrations and take them at face value, saying *Yad* not *Qudrah*. This also includes sticking and limiting oneself to the use of the Arabic wording. Therefore, one should not translate them to hand, face, essence etc⁷¹. Al-Shirāzī (d. 468H) stated that Imām Aḥmad said concerning the reported Attributes (akhbār al-ṣifāt): 'pass over them, as they come' (amrūhā kamā jā'a)⁷². A man asked Imām Aḥmad concerning the statement: 'Verily, Allāh yanzilu⁷³ every night to the heaven of this world (i.e. the lowest heaven)', and he (i.e. Imām Aḥmad) said: 'this ḥadīth is authentic (ṣaḥīḥ).' The man asked 'does His *Qudrah* or He himself

or interpretation with that which opposes their apparentness, nor comparing them with the attributes of the creation nor with the features of contingencies (al-muḥdathin). On the contrary, (they) passed over them, as they came (amrūhā kamā jā'a) and referred knowledge of it (back) to the One who stated them, and its meaning (back) to the one who spoke with it [...] and they knew that the one (i.e. Allāh or the Prophet ﷺ) who spoke with them was truthful, (there being) no doubt in his sincerity; therefore, they believed Him. They did not know the reality of their meaning, thus they remained silent concerning that which they did not know. And the later and the first (from them) took this and cautioned each other with the good of following and stopping where the first of them stopped; and they warned from exceeding them, and straying from their path, and they made their way and doctrine clear for them. We hope that Allāh, the Exalted, will make us from amongst those who imitate them in elucidating what they elucidated, and travel the path they travelled.'

In *Tahrim al-Nazar*, p. 54, he says concerning their way: 'It is the believe in the wording, the ayāt and reports, with the meaning that was intended by Allāh, the Exalted; and silence concerning what we do not know from its meanings; to abandon searching for what we were not burdened with by Allāh; and (to abandon) searching for their explanation and what He did not inform us about from His 'ilm; and to follow the way of the firmly-grounded in knowledge; those praised by Allāh in His manifest Book, when He said: 'We believe in it. All [of it] is from our Lord...' (Qurān: 3:7).'

⁷¹ The words: hand, face and essence given above are only used as a way of providing examples. They are not to be understood as valid translations for specific Attributes of Allāh.

⁷² And this statement (pass over it, as it comes), has been reported from Imām Aḥmad in a variety of forms. In *Uṣūl al-Sunnah*, from Imām Aḥmad himself, p. 8, he states concerning the ḥadīth of 'the seeing' (ru'yah) of Allāh, and similar narrations: 'we believe in it as it has come' (nu'min bihi kamā jā'a). Al-Khallāl (d. 311H) reports in *al-Sunnah*, no. 283, by way of Abū Bakr al-Marūdhī (d. 275H) that Imām Aḥmad said a similar thing: as did al-Ājurri (d. 360H) in *al-Shar'ah*, no. 726. Ibn Baṭṭah reports the same in *al-Iḥnāh*, vol. 7, no. 50, and by way of al-Marūdhī, albeit with regards to the ḥadīth of the Attributes, vol. 7, no. 253.

⁷³ *Yanzilu* can be translated as '(he) descends'

yanzilu? Imām Aḥmad responded: 'Woe to you (you are doomed), what is this! Pass the ḥadīth on as it has come' (i.e. as it has been narrated)⁷⁴, and upon us are the reports of the Salaf and they are an excellent example to follow.⁷⁵ and affirming (ithbāt) what has been mentioned in the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ concerning the Attributes, without turning to ta'wīl [whenever ta'wīl is mentioned without specification, it most often refers to ta'wīl tafṣilī. Only when one needs to make a distinction between the two form of ta'wīl, are they made specific from each other].

⁷⁴ Understanding the specific phrases: *kamā jā'at*, '*alā ṣāhiri*', '*alā ḥaqīqati*'.

- *Wa al-ḥadīth 'indana 'alā ṣāhiri kamā jā'at*: 'and the narration with us are taken upon their apparentness, as they have come'.
- *na'minu bihi kamā jā'at 'alā ṣāhiri* 'we believe in it as they have come, upon their apparentness'.

This means, one accepts and takes the narration(s) as they are, with those wordings, not changing or interpreting anything of them whether one understands their meaning of or not. Therefore, concerning the texts containing Attributes of Allāh, one should just accept their wording, leave them as they are, and consign the meaning back to Allāh. With regards to texts which can be understood, such as those that contains a certain ruling or a description of paradise, an individual may or may not understand their apparent meaning.

There are two possibilities: either one understands the meaning of a text and believes in it, or if the meaning is problematic then one does tafwīd or resorts to ijtihād in understanding the intended meaning, however, in the case of the Attributes one should be careful and only resort to tafwīd; as speaking about Allāh without knowledge is prohibited.

- '*Alā ḥaqīqati* 'upon the literal (meaning)'.

This term *ḥaqīqī* is problematic. When used it should be investigated to see what is meant by it, for it can be used in different ways. It can be used as a term that comes close to the proper way of handling the Attributes of Allāh or, it can also be used in a way as to indicate comparison (*tashbīh*) and anthropomorphization (*tajsim*). In the latter case, it is unacceptable and prohibited because it describes Allāh in the way of His creation. In the former case, when the term 'the literal meaning' (*al-ma'nā al-ḥaqīqī*) is used, it denotes that the meaning of a particular word, which is unknown to us, is also an actual meaning. So, in accordance with this usage there are two actual meanings for the same word, such as in the case with the word '*ayn*'. One actual meaning of '*ayn*' is 'an eye', however another is 'a spy'. The word *ḥājib* means both 'eyebrow' and 'doorkeeper'. There may also be more than two actual meanings for the same word. Although, this outlook may be incorrect, it nevertheless still results in *tanzīh* (the transcendence) of Allāh and His Attributes. Amongst the Ḥanābilāh who stated that the Attributes are literal (*ḥaqīqīyyah*) was Najm al-Dīn al-Tūfī; see, *Ḥalāl al-'Uqd fī Bayān Ahkām al-Mu'aqad* (p. 32-33).

⁷⁵ The specific rendition of this report from Imām Aḥmad is found in *Al-Tabṣirah fī Uṣūl al-Dīn*, p. 146, by al-Shīrāzi. Older works such as *Iḥyā' al-Ta'wīlat*, no. 260, by Qāḍī Abī Ya'qūb, and *Sharḥ Uṣūl l'Inqād*, vol. 2, no. 777, by al-Lalīkātī report a narration, by way of Ḥanbal b. Ishāq, that shares similarities to what is found in *al-Tabṣirah*.

THE ORDER TO FOLLOW THE SUNNAH AND A WARNING AGAINST INNOVATION

وَقَدْ أَمَرْنَا بِاتِّبَاعِ آثَارِهِمْ وَالْإِهْتِدَاءِ بِمَنَارِهِمْ، وَحَذَرْنَا الْمُحَدَّثَاتِ، وَأَخْبَرْنَا أَنَّهَا مِنَ الضَّلَالَاتِ، فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «عَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِي وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ الْمَهْدِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِي، عَضُّوا عَلَيْهَا بِالتَّوَاجِدِ، وَإِنَّا كُمْ وَمُحَدَّثَاتِ الْأُمُورِ، فَإِنَّ كُلَّ مُحَدَّثَةٍ يَدْعُو، وَكُلُّ يَدْعُو ضَلَالَةٌ».

We have been ordered to follow their way and to be guided by their example. We have been warned of innovations and we have been informed that they are from the things that lead astray. The Prophet ﷺ said: 'upon you is my Sunnah and the sunnah of the rightly-guided caliphs after me, bite on to it with your molar teeth and beware of newly invented matters. Verily, every newly invented matter is an innovation, and every innovation is a misguidance.'

وَقَالَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مَسْعُودٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: (اتَّبِعُوا وَلَا تَبْتَدِعُوا فَقَدْ كُفِّتُمْ).

'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: 'Follow and do not innovate! For indeed you have been sufficed.'

وَقَالَ عُمَرُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْغَزِيرِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كَلَامًا مَعْنَاهُ: (قِفْ حَيْثُ وَقَفَ الْقَوْمُ، فَإِنَّهُمْ عَنِ عِلْمٍ وَقَفُوا، وَبَصِيرٍ نَافِلٍ كَفُّوا، وَلَهُمْ عَلَى كَسْفِهَا كَانُوا أَقْوَى، وَبِالْفَضْلِ لَوْ كَانَ فِيهَا أُخْرَى، فَلَئِنْ قُلْتُمْ: حَدَّثَ بَعْدَهُمْ. فَمَا أَخَذْتَهُ إِلَّا مَنْ خَالَفَ هَدْيَهُمْ، وَرَغِبَ عَنْ سُنَّتِهِمْ، وَقَدْ وَصَّفُوا مِنْهُ مَا يَشْفِي، وَتَكَلَّمُوا مِنْهُ بِمَا يَكْفِي، فَمَا فَوْقَهُمْ مُحَسَّرٌ، وَمَا دُونَهُمْ مُقْصَرٌ، لَقَدْ قَصَرَ عَنْهُمْ قَوْمٌ فَجَحَقُوا، وَتَجَاوَزَهُمْ آخَرُونَ فَقَلَبُوا، وَإِنَّهُمْ يَمَانُونَ ذَلِكَ لَعَلَى هُدًى مُسْتَقِيمٍ).

'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, may Allāh be pleased with him, said, with the meaning of: 'Stop where the people have stopped! For indeed, they have stopped upon knowledge. The clear evidences would suffice them and they were the strongest at manifesting it. If there were any additions, they would have done them first. If you say: 'it was introduced after them', then no one has introduced it except the one who opposed their guidance and desires other than their example. For they have certainly described from it what satisfies, and have spoken about it with what suffices. Consequently, whatever is above them is excessiveness, and what is below them is inadequacy. Indeed, some people have fallen short of them and were removed, while others went beyond them and fell into extremism. And they were between these; upon straight guidance.'

وَقَالَ الْإِمَامُ أَبُو عَمْرٍو الْأَوْزَاعِيُّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: (عَلَيْكَ بِأَثَارِ مَنْ سَلَفَ وَإِنْ رَفَضَكَ النَّاسُ، وَإِيَّاكَ وَآرَاءَ الرِّجَالِ وَإِنْ زَخَرَفُوهُ لَكَ بِالْقَوْلِ).

Imām Abū 'Amr al-Awzā'i, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: 'Adhere to the narrations of those who came before you, even if the people avoid you and reject you. And beware of the opinions of men, even if they beautify them for you with their speech.'

وَقَالَ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ الْأَدْرِمِيُّ لِرَجُلٍ تَكَلَّمَ بِبِدْعَةٍ وَدَعَا النَّاسَ إِلَيْهَا: (هَلْ عَلِمَهَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَبُو بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرُ وَعُثْمَانُ وَعَلِيٌّ أَوْ لَمْ يَعْلَمُوهَا؟ قَالَ: لَمْ يَعْلَمُوهَا، قَالَ: فَسَيِّئٌ لَمْ يَعْلَمْهُ هَؤُلَاءِ عَلِمْتَهُ أَنْتَ؟ قَالَ الرَّجُلُ: فَإِنِّي أَقُولُ: قَدْ عَلِمُوهَا، قَالَ: أَقْوَيْعُهُمْ أَنْ لَا يَتَكَلَّمُوا بِهِ وَلَا يَدْعُوا النَّاسَ إِلَيْهِ، أَمْ لَمْ يَسْغَهُمْ؟ قَالَ: بَلَى وَسِعَهُمْ، قَالَ: فَسَيِّئٌ وَسِعَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَخُلَفَاءَهُ، لَا يَسْغُكَ أَنْتَ؟ فَانْقَطَعَ الرَّجُلُ، فَقَالَ الْخَلِيفَةُ، وَكَانَ حَاضِرًا: لَا وَسَّعَ اللَّهُ عَلَى مَنْ لَمْ يَسْغَهُ مَا وَسَّعَهُمْ!).

Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Adramī said to a man – who was speaking of an innovation and calling people to it: 'Did the Messenger of Allah, Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī have knowledge of this or did they not have knowledge of it?' The man replied: 'They did not have knowledge of it'. He (al-Adramī) said: 'So, something which they had no knowledge of, you know?!' The man responded: 'Then I say that they did know of it'. He (al-Adramī) said: 'Was it sufficient for them that they did not speak about it nor call the people towards it, or was it not sufficient for them?' The man replied: 'Of course it was sufficient for them'. He (al-Adramī): 'So, something which was sufficient for the Messenger of Allāh and his caliphs is not sufficient for you?!' So, the man refrained (from continuing the debate) and the caliph who was present said, 'May Allāh not suffice the one who is not satisfied by what they found sufficient.'

وَعَكَدَا مَنْ لَمْ يَسْغُهُ مَا وَسَّعَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَصْحَابُهُ وَالتَّابِعِينَ لَهُمْ
بِإِحْسَانٍ، وَالْأَيْمَةَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ، وَالرَّاسِخِينَ فِي الْعِلْمِ، مِنْ تِلَاوَةِ آيَاتِ الصِّفَاتِ وَقِرَاءَةِ
أَخْبَارِهَا، وَإِمْرَارِهَا كَمَا جَاءَتْ، فَلَا وَسَّعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ.

Likewise, May Allāh not suffice whoever is not sufficed by that what sufficed the Messenger, his Companions, their followers who followed them in righteousness, and the imāms that came after them, as well as those firmly grounded in knowledge; concerning recitation of the āyāt of the Attributes, and reading of their reports, and passing over them as they came.

*Commentary: The Order to Follow the Sunnah
and a Warning against Innovation*

We have been ordered to follow their way [i.e. the way of the Prophet ﷺ, his companions and the great imāms from the Salaf who followed them] **and to be guided by their example** [Ibn Hubayrah (d. 560H) said: 'It is not the madhhab of Aḥmad, except for following, categorically, what the Salaf said. He said as they said, and what they

were silent about, he was silent about. To the extent that he rejected to say: "my utterance of the Qurān is created, or uncreated"; because they did not say it. He said concerning āyāt of the Attributes: pass them on, as they came⁷⁶). **We have been warned of innovations and we have been informed that they are from the things that lead astray. The Prophet ﷺ said [in a famous narration]: 'upon you is [to follow] my Sunnah and [to follow] the sunnah of the rightly-guided caliphs after me, bite on to it with your molar teeth [being a metaphor for firmly sticking to something without leaving it] and beware of newly invented matters. Verily, every newly invented matter is an innovation, and every innovation is a misguidance.'**⁷⁷

'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd (d. 32H), may Allāh be pleased with him, said: **'Follow [the Sunnah strictly, without adding to it or omitting from it] and do not innovate! Because you have been sufficed'**⁷⁸ [with the perfection of the religion in the era before you. So, if they did not speak about a certain thing, then do not speak about it, unless there is a very serious innovation that needs to be refuted. In that case, one is forced to speak about something they did not speak about. Otherwise, one should keep his approach as simple as they did and remain silent⁷⁹].

'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz (d. 101H), may Allāh be pleased with him, said with the meaning of: **'Stop where the people have stopped! For indeed, they have stopped upon knowledge [meaning, they did not stop because they were ignorant, instead they stopped because they were knowledgeable. This affirms that the Salaf were more knowledgeable**

⁷⁶ Ibn Rajab, *Dhayl 'alā Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilāh*, vol. 2, p. 155.

⁷⁷ Imām Ahmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 17145 / Abū Dawūd, no. 4607 / Al-Tirmidhī no. 2676.

⁷⁸ Various successors (tabi'in) reported it from Ibn Mas'ūd. For example, al-Nakha'i, as found in *Kitāb al-ʿIlm*, no. 54, by al-Khaythamāh (d. 234H); and in the *Musnad* of (Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh) al-Dārimī (d. 255H), no. 224, it is found as a report from al-Sulamī (d. 75H).

⁷⁹ With regards to remaining silent when it comes to the Attributes, Ibn Qudāmāh states in *Tahṭīm al-Nazar* (p. 54): 'And if fault is found in (the approach of) silence with respect to explanation, this is a mistake! Because, we do not know its explanation. It is obligatory for whoever does not know anything, to be silent concerning it and it is prohibited for him to speak regarding it. Allāh, Exalted is He, said: *'do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge.'* (Qurān: 17:36) and Allāh, Exalted is He, mentioned concerning the prohibitions: *'to say about Allāh what you do not know.'* (Qurān: 2:169). Also, if this position is found erroneous, then the Prophet ﷺ is erroneous (as well). Indeed, he believed in Allāh and His words, and he did not explain anything of it, nor did he expound on their meanings.'

than the Khalaf⁸⁰). The clear evidences would suffice them and they were the strongest at manifesting it. If there were any additions, they would have done them first [the Salaf refrained from going beyond the Sunnah even though they were more capable of uncovering additional benefits and more deserving of any extra virtue, yet they did not find exceeding the Sunnah to be a good thing. If you say: 'it was introduced after them', then no one has introduced it except the one who opposed their guidance [as their guidance is to not delve into certain matters] and desires other than their example. For they have certainly described from it [i.e. the religion] what satisfies, and have spoken about it [i.e. the religion] with what suffices [for, they passed on everything and did not hold anything back or keep it secret]. Consequently, whatever is above them [meaning, doing or saying more than what they did] is excessiveness, and what is below them [meaning, doing or saying less than what they did] is inadequacy. Indeed, some people have fallen short of them and were removed [from the Sunnah], while others went beyond them and fell into extremism. And they [the companions and the imams of the Salaf] were between these [meaning, between the deviations of excessiveness and inadequacy].

So, from amongst those who have deviated to different degrees are: the Mu'tazilah, the Ashā'irah and the Salafiyyah. The Ashā'irah as a group are still considered from Ahl al-Sunnah, because from amongst their different approaches towards the Attributes, is an approach similar to that of the Hanābilah. Ultimately, they believe in the tanzih⁸¹ of Allāh and therefore

⁸⁰ Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali wrote concerning the superiority of the Salaf over the Khalaf, titled *Bayan Faḍl Tim al-Salaf*. On p. 93, He said: 'Whether it is their words in the foundation of the religion (uṣūl al-dīn) or its branches (furū'), in tafsīr in ascetism (zuhd), heart-softeners (raq'iq), points of wisdom and exhortation, and other than these of what they spoke of; then whoever travels upon their path, he is indeed guided.'

⁸¹ Tanzih: often translated as 'transcendence'. It could be rendered as: to declare something or someone pure and free of something else. Relating to Allāh and His Attributes, it is defined as Allāh being declared incomparable with anything of His creation. In this regard it is juxtaposed with the concept of tashbih; which is to make resemblance between Allāh and anything of His creation in general - and to humans in particular.

should be included in Ahl al-Sunnah⁸²; upon straight guidance.⁸³

Imām Abū 'Amr al-Awzā'i (d. 157H), may Allāh be pleased with him, said: 'Adhere to the narrations of those who come before you [meaning, the way of the Companions and the ones who followed them], even if the people avoid you and reject you. And beware of the [baseless] opinions of men [meaning, the opinions that are not based on the Sunnah, but instead on personal preferences and desires], even if they beautify them for you with their speech'⁸⁴ [for one may use a beautiful way of speaking or (irrelevant) Qurānic verses or aḥādith to support one's argument, and people with a poor mentality or understanding could easily be convinced that it is a good claim or opinion. Therefore, when it comes to the claims and opinion of men one should always check whether the arguments and evidences are relevant to the claim that is being made. If this is done in fiqh, then how about in matters of 'aqidah where one should be more critical towards the claims and opinions of men!]

⁸² Throughout the course of history, the Hanābilah and Ashā'irah have always exchanged harsh words and critique, evident from works of the scholars from the early times; and even past the time of Ibn Qudāmah (e.g. the various clashes between Ibn Taymiyyah and his Ash'ari contemporaries which occurred more than hundred years after the death of Ibn Qudāmah). It has already been mentioned that this negative and hostile attitude towards the Ashā'irah is evident from the words of Ibn Qudāmah himself throughout his various works.

This attitude however must be contextualised, and thought must be given to the socio-political context at the time in which these scholars lived. Most probably it should be understood that (harsh) criticism from the Hanābilah was directed to certain aspects of the Ash'ari madhhab and/or specific individuals, rather than at the school and its beliefs as a whole. For example, in *Tahrīm al-Nazar*, Ibn Qudāmah censures Ibn 'Aqil, and the Ash'ari Jawzi are not seeking to critique or refute the ideas and practices of the famous book *Talīṣ al-Ḥisb* by Ibn al-But but is directed only towards certain specific aspects of the Ṣūfiyyah in general.

In recent times, the hostilities between the Hanābilah and Ashā'irah seem to have decreased, and in the last few centuries, there has emerged amongst the scholars of the Hanābilah the opinion that the Ashā'irah are to be considered amongst the scholars of the details can be found in the 'aqidah works of Ibn al-Bāqī and al-Safārīnī.

⁸³ It appears to be the saying of 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Abi Salamah al-Majishūn (d. 164H) as is apparent from *Burhān fī Bayān al-Qurān*, p. 88-89, in which Ibn Qudāmah transmits it from him with minor differences. Although in *al-Burhān*, al-Munāẓarah (p. 79) and *al-Lum'ah* Perhaps he was referring to that which is reported from 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz concerning a question regarding al-qadar, which is o.a. reported by Abū Dawūd, no. 4612 /

his reply to a question regarding al-qadar, which is o.a. reported by Abū Dawūd, no. 4612 /

⁸⁴ Reported by al-Ajurri in *Kitāb al-Shar'ah*, vol. 1, no. 127.

Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Adramī⁸⁵ [a scholar from the third century] **said to a man**⁸⁶ **who was speaking of an innovation** [which was the innovation of the created nature of the Qurān (fitnah khalq al-Qurān)] **and calling people to it: 'Did the Messenger of Allāh, Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī have knowledge of this [innovation] or did they not have knowledge of it?'** The man replied: **'They did not have knowledge of it'.** He (al-Adramī) said: **'So, something which they had no knowledge of, you know?'** The man responded: **'Then I say that they did know of it'.** He (al-Adramī) said: **'Was it sufficient for them that they did not speak about it nor call the people towards it, or was it not sufficient for them?'** [so, the innovator had two options: 1) either to say they had known it but did not inform people about it (i.e. the Messenger, Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Alī kept it a secret), or 2) they told people what they knew. In the latter case, one should ask for proof in the form of a report containing this specific knowledge (i.e. that the Qurān is created) - and such narration does not exist]. The man replied: **'Of course it was sufficient for them'.** He (al-Adramī) said: **'So, something which was sufficient for the Messenger of Allāh and his caliphs is not sufficient for you?'**⁸⁷ **So, the man refrained (from continuing the debate) and the caliph [Wāthiq bi-Allāh (d. 232H), the grandson of the caliph Harūn al-Rashid (d. 193H)]⁸⁸ who was present** [as these debates regularly took place in

⁸⁵ It appears that the name is misspelled, as it should be al-Ādharmī (as is found in the various reports of the story). Also, some versions of *al-Lum'ah* mention al-Ādharmī instead of al-Adramī. See the edition of *al-Lum'ah* by al-Farḥān, titled *Risālah al-ʿIrqād*, p. 75, footnote 3; in which he compares the differences in the various texts of *al-Lum'ah*.

⁸⁶ He is al-Qāḍī Ibn Abī Du'ād; the chief investigator of the Mu'tazilī inquisition.

⁸⁷ In *Tahṛīm al-Naṣar*, p. 51, Ibn Qudāmah uses a similar line of argumentation to establish that there is no need, and in fact no way, to know the meaning of the Attributes, because it was not known to the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions. If he ﷺ knew it, he would have explained it to them, and they to the subsequent generation and so forth. So, he says: 'If explanation was an obligation, the Prophet ﷺ would have clarified it to his Ummah; because it is not permitted to delay an explanation from its time. If it was an obligation for us to do the interpretation, then it would be an obligation for the Prophet ﷺ (i.e. he would have to do the same); because he is an equivalent to us with regards to the rulings. If it was an obligation for him to do so, he would not be deficient in it. And because he ﷺ was keen and careful for his Ummah, he would not hide anything from them that Allāh ordered him with. Indeed, Allāh has said: 'O Messenger, announce that which has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message...' (Qurān: 5:67).'

⁸⁸ The story is told through 'al-Muhtadī' (d. 256H), who is the son of al-Wāthiq. Ibn al-Jawzī mentions in *Manāqib al-Imām Ahmad*, p. 481, that caliph Wāthiq recanted his view that the

the court of the caliph who often attended himself] said, 'May Allāh not suffice the one who is not satisfied by what they [meaning, the Messenger and his companions] found sufficient.'⁸⁹

Likewise, May Allāh not suffice whoever is not sufficed by that what sufficed the Messenger, his Companions, their followers who followed them in righteousness, and the imāms that came after them, as well as those firmly grounded in knowledge; concerning recitation of the āyāt of the Attributes, and reading of their reports [meaning, it is sufficient to just recite these āyāt and aḥādith] and passing over them as they came [meaning, leaving these reports just as they were transmitted, without re-interpreting them; and all who were mentioned above found sufficiency in this. Ibn al-Jawzī⁹⁰ said, while explaining the ḥadith: 'Allāh yaḍḥak'⁹¹ at the two men': 'The majority of the Salaf did not do ta'wil when it came to this (i.e. the reports which mention the Attributes), and they passed over it as it came, and imrār should be taken into consideration in this: (it is) the belief that the Attributes of Allāh do not resemble (or do not have any similarities with) the attributes of the creation. The meaning of al-imrār is: having no knowledge of the intended meaning of it (i.e. the Attributes), accompanied with the belief of tanzīh.'⁹² Ibn al-Jawzī is accurate in saying 'the majority of the Salaf, as it has been explained earlier that the Salaf are not one homogenous

Qurān was created, and repented. It seems that this debate was the reason for his recantation. Another version of the story is also related by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghḍādī (d. 463H) in *Tārīkh (Baghdād) Madīnah al-Salām*, vol. 11, no. 5142.

⁸⁹ Ibn al-Jawzī relates two versions of the story in *Manāqib al-Imām Aḥmad*, p. 475-481, one being short and the other considerably longer. Ibn Qudāmah paraphrases the short version in *al-Lum'ah*. The longer version is reported o.a. by al-Ājurri in *Kitāb al-Sharī'ah*, no. 193.

⁹⁰ When it comes to statements of Ibn al-Jawzī on issues of 'aqidah, and in particular the Attributes of Allāh, the Ḥanābilah take a critical approach. To state it in simple terms: Ibn al-Jawzī does not represent the Ḥanbali madhhab. He has his own opinions, at times he considers some Attributes as the Ḥanābilah do, while other times he opts for a different approach (and resorts to ta'wil tafṣīl), yet in other instances he does not consider some Attributes to be Attributes at all. At times he himself is confused concerning the issue of the Attributes, and is often confusing to understand. This was all mentioned in the larger works of Ḥanbali 'aqidah, authored by scholars such as: al-Safārīnī and Mar'ī al-Karmī. In all, the scholars of the Ḥanābilah have assessed the different statements of Ibn al-Jawzī and taken from them what they appreciated and found in agreement with the Ḥanbali madhhab, such as the statement mentioned in this ḥāshiyah.

⁹¹ Yaḍḥak can be translated as '(he) laughs'.

⁹² Ibn Hajar Al-'Asqalānī, *Fath al-Bārī*, vol 9, p. 76, no. 2826.

group who all agreed on, and said, the same thing. It is therefore correct to say, 'the majority of the Salaf' instead of claiming *ijmā'* or saying 'they all said such-and-such'.

The exposition of Ibn al-Jawzī concerning *imrār* is beneficial, as *imrār* is usually explained according to its linguistic meaning, i.e. to pass over something without discussing it. In this way it is explained according to the consequences of 'passing over' something. However, Ibn al-Jawzī explains the technical definition, i.e. having no knowledge of the intended meaning of that which one passes over, in this context being the Attributes of Allāh, while being accompanied with the belief of *tanzīh*].

ĀYĀT AND AḤĀDĪTH CONCERNING ALLĀH'S ATTRIBUTES

فَمِمَّا جَاءَ مِنْ آيَاتِ الصِّفَاتِ قَوْلُ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: ﴿وَيَتَقَىٰ وَجْهَ رَبِّكَ﴾، وَقَوْلُهُ سُبحَانَهُ
وَتَعَالَى: ﴿بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ﴾، وَقَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى إِخْبَارًا عَنْ عِيسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَنَّهُ قَالَ:
﴿تَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ﴾، وَقَوْلُهُ سُبحَانَهُ: ﴿وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ﴾، وَقَوْلُهُ
تَعَالَى: ﴿وَلَنْ يَنْظُرُوا إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ﴾، وَقَوْلُهُ: ﴿رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ﴾. وَقَوْلُهُ
تَعَالَى: ﴿يُجِيبُهُمْ وَيُجِيبُونَهُ﴾، وَقَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى فِي الْكُفَّارِ: ﴿غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ﴾، وَقَوْلُهُ
تَعَالَى: ﴿اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَسْخَطَ اللَّهَ﴾، وَقَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿كَرِهَ اللَّهُ انبِعَاثَهُمْ﴾.

From what has come in the āyāt concerning the Attributes, is the statement of Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic: *'And the Wajh of Your Lord, full of Majesty and Honour, will abide forever.'*⁹³ His saying, free of imperfections and Exalted is He: *'On the contrary, His Yadāhu are widely outstretched'*⁹⁴. His statement, Exalted is He, in which He informs us that 'Isa b. Maryam, peace be upon him, said: *'You know what is in my inner-self, though I do not know what is in Your Nafs.'*⁹⁵ And His statement, free of imperfections is He: *'And your Lord jā'a.'*⁹⁶ His statement, Exalted is He: *'Do they then wait for anything other than that Allāh ya'tiya to them'*⁹⁷. And His statement: *'Allāh is raḍīyā with them, and they are pleased with Him.'*⁹⁸ And His statement, Exalted is He: *'He will yuḥibu them, and they will love Him.'*⁹⁹ And His saying, Exalted is He, concerning the disbelievers: *'and the ghaḍab of Allāh is upon them.'*¹⁰⁰ His saying, Exalted is He: *'That is because they followed what askhaḥa Allāh.'*¹⁰¹ And His saying, Exalted is He: *'Allāh kariha their being sent forth.'*¹⁰²

⁹³ Qurān: 55:27

⁹⁴ Qurān: 5:64

⁹⁵ Qurān: 5:116

⁹⁶ Qurān: 89:22

⁹⁷ Qurān: 2:210

⁹⁸ Qurān: 5:119

⁹⁹ Qurān: 5:54

¹⁰⁰ Qurān: 48:6

¹⁰¹ Qurān: 47:28

¹⁰² Qurān: 9:46

وَمِنَ السُّنَنِ قَوْلُ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «يَنْزِلُ رَبُّنَا تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ إِلَى سَمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا»، وَقَوْلُهُ: «يَغْجَبُ رَبُّكَ مِنَ الشَّابِّ لَيْسَتْ لَهُ حَيَوَةٌ»، وَقَوْلُهُ: «يَضْحَكُ اللَّهُ إِلَى رَجُلَيْنِ قَتَلَ أَحَدُهُمَا الْآخَرَ ثُمَّ يَدْخُلَانِ الْجَنَّةَ».

From the Sunnah is the statement of the Prophet ﷺ: 'Our Lord, may He be Blessed and Exalted, yanzilu to the lowest heaven every night'. He ﷺ said: 'Your Lord ya'jibu by the youth who does not possess childish manners,' and his statement ﷺ: 'Allāh yaḍḥak at two men, one of whom kills the other and they both enter Paradise.'

فَهَذَا وَمَا أَشْبَهَهُ يَمَّا صَحَّ سَنَدُهُ، وَعُدَّتْ رَوَاتُهُ، تَوْثِقُ بِهِ، وَلَا نَزْدُهُ، وَلَا نَجْحَدُهُ، وَلَا نَتَأَوَّلُهُ بِتَأْوِيلٍ يُعَالِفُ ظَاهِرَهُ، وَلَا نُشَبِّهُهُ بِصِفَاتِ الْمَخْلُوقِينَ، وَلَا بِسِمَاتِ الْمُحَدَّثِينَ، وَنَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى لَا شَبِيهَ لَهُ، وَلَا تَطْلِيحَ: «لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ»، وَكُلُّ مَا تُخَيَّلُ فِي الذَّهْنِ أَوْ خَطَرَ بِالْبَالِ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى يَخْلَاهُ.

This and others similar to it from those whose chain of narration are authentic, and whose reporters are acceptable; We believe in it, and do not reject it, nor deny it, nor do we (re)interpret it with interpretation which contradicts its obvious meaning. We do not make comparisons with the attributes of creation, nor do we use the names (given) by the innovators. And we know that Allāh, Glorified and Exalted is He, has no similar or equal: 'There is nothing whatsoever like Him. And He is al-Samī', al-Baṣīr.¹⁰³ Hence, everything that is imagined by the mind or produced in ones thought, then surely Allāh is different from it.

وَمِنَ ذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: «الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى». وَقَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: «عَامِنُكُمْ مِّنَ فِي السَّمَاءِ»، وَقَوْلُ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ تَقَدَّسَ اسْمُكَ». وَقَالَ لِلْجَارِيَةِ: «أَتَيْنَ اللَّهُ؟»، قَالَتْ: فِي السَّمَاءِ قَالَ: «أَعَيْقَهَا فَإِنَّهَا مُؤْمِنَةٌ». رَوَاهُ مَالِكٌ بْنُ أَنَسٍ وَمُسْلِمٌ وَغَيْرُهُمَا مِنَ الْأَثَمَةِ. وَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

¹⁰³ Qurān: 42:11

لِحُضْنِي: «كَمْ إِلَهًا نَعْبُدُ؟» قَالَ: سَبْعَةٌ: سِتَّةٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَوَاحِدًا فِي السَّمَاءِ، قَالَ: «مَنْ لِرَغْبَتِكَ وَرَهْبَتِكَ؟» قَالَ: الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ، قَالَ: «فَأَتْرِكُ السَّبْعَ وَأَعْبُدُ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُكَ دَعْوَتِي»، فَأَسْلَمَ وَعَلَّمَهُ التَّيْبِي صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْ يَقُولَ: «اللَّهُمَّ الْهِنِّي رُشْدِي وَفِي شَرِّ نَفْسِي». وَفِيمَا نُقِلَ مِنْ عِلَامَاتِ التَّيْبِي صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَصْحَابِهِ فِي الْكُتُبِ الْمُتَقَدِّمَةِ أَنَّهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ بِالْأَرْضِ، وَيَرْعَمُونَ أَنْ يَلْتَهُمُ فِي السَّمَاءِ. وَرَوَى أَبُو دَاوُدَ فِي سُنَنِهِ أَنَّ التَّيْبِي صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: «إِنْ مَا بَيْنَ سَمَاءٍ إِلَى سَمَاءٍ مَسِيرَةٌ كَذَا وَكَذَا» - وَذَكَرَ الْخَيْرَ إِلَى قَوْلِهِ: «وَقَوْفُ ذَلِكَ الْعَرْشِ وَاللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ فَوْقَ ذَلِكَ».

And from this is His statement, Exalted is He: 'al-Rahmān istawā over the Throne'¹⁰⁴, and His statement, Exalted is He: 'Do you feel secure that He who is fi al-samā'¹⁰⁵. And the statement of the Prophet: 'Our Lord is Allah, who is fi al-samā' Sanctified be Your Name.' Also His ﷺ saying to the slave-girl: 'Where is Allāh? She said: 'fi al-samā'' So he said: 'Set her free, for indeed she is a believer.'; as reported by Muslim and Mālik b. Anas and others from the imāms. The Prophet ﷺ said to Ḥusayn (b. Imrān): 'How many gods do you worship? He said: 'seven; six in the earth and one fi al-samā'. He ﷺ said: 'Who is it that you hope in and fear?' He said: 'The One that fi al-samā'. He ﷺ said: 'Then abandon the six and worship the One who fi al-samā', and I will teach you two supplications.' So, he accepted Islām and the Prophet ﷺ taught him to say: 'Oh Allāh, Grant me guidance and save me from the evil of myself.' What was reported in the previously revealed books, concerning the signs of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions, is that: they prostrate on the earth while they claim that their god is fi al-samā'. Abū Dawūd reported in his Sunan that the Prophet ﷺ said: 'Indeed, what is between one level of heaven and (another) level of heaven is a distance of such and such....' He ﷺ continued until he mentioned: 'And above that is the Throne. And Allāh, the One free of all defects, is above that.'

¹⁰⁴ Qurān: 20:5

¹⁰⁵ Qurān: 67:16

فَهَذَا وَمَا أَشْبَهَهُ بِمَا أَجْمَعَ السَّلَفُ رَحِمَهُمُ اللَّهُ عَلَى تَقْلِيدِهِ وَقَبُولِهِ وَلَمْ يَتَعَرَّضُوا لِرَدِّهِ وَلَا تَأْيِيدِهِ وَلَا تَنْسِيهِهِ وَلَا تَمْثِيلِهِ.

This and similar to it from what the Salaf, may Allāh have mercy on them, have agreed upon concerning transmission and accepting, and not subjecting it to outright rejection nor distortion, comparison or making example for it.

سُئِلَ الْإِمَامُ مَالِكُ بْنُ أَنَسٍ رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ فَقِيلَ: (يَا أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ: ﴿الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى﴾ كَيْفَ اسْتَوَى؟ فَقَالَ: الْاسْتِوَاءُ غَيْرُ مَجْهُولٍ، وَالْكَيْفُ غَيْرُ مَعْقُولٍ، وَالْإِيمَانُ بِهِ وَاجِبٌ وَالسُّؤَالُ عَنْهُ بِذَعَةٍ، ثُمَّ أَمَرَ بِالرَّجُلِ فَأُخْرِجَ.

Imām Mālik b. Anas was once questioned, and it was said to him: 'O Abā 'Abd Allāh! The most Merciful *istawā* over the Throne. How is the *istiwā*?' So, he responded: 'The *istiwā* is not unknown. The 'how' is incomprehensible. Believing in it is an obligation. And asking concerning it is an innovation.' Then he commanded someone, and he was thrown out.'

Commentary: *Āyāt and Aḥādīth concerning Allāh's Attributes*

[In the following two chapters the author will list various āyāt and aḥādīth regarding the Attributes. As previously mentioned on more than one occasion, giving a specific meaning (or explanation) to an Attribute of Allāh is categorically prohibited. For this reason, the commentary will not expound on these āyāt and aḥādīth in great detail, sufficing only with mentioning the general meanings of particular āyāt and aḥādīth. It is stressed that the general meanings that are given for these āyāt and aḥādīth should not to be confused for specific interpretations for the Attributes themselves. Therefore, when it is said that from the āyāh *'His Yadaḥu'*¹⁰⁶ are widely outstretched' it is generally understood to mean that Allāh is generous and can do whatever he wants. This does not mean

¹⁰⁶ Yadaḥu can be translated as 'both his hands'.

that *'His Yadāhu'* means 'His Generosity'. Giving a general explanation to a whole text differs from giving a specific interpretation or explanation of a specific Attribute that is mentioned in an āyah or ḥadith.]

From what has come in the āyāt concerning the Attributes, is the statement of Allāh, The Mighty and Majestic: 'And the Wajh of Your Lord, full of Majesty and Honour, will abide forever.'¹⁰⁷ [the general meaning being, that Allāh has no end and likewise no beginning]. **His saying, free of imperfections and Exalted is He: 'On the contrary, His Yadāhu are widely outstretched.'**¹⁰⁸ [and the general meaning is, that Allāh has the full ability and *Irādah* to do anything and nothing can stop Him from doing what he wants. He is the most generous]. **His statement, Exalted is He, in which He informs us that 'Isa b. Maryam, peace be upon him, said: 'You know what is in my inner-self, though I do not know what is in Your Nafs'**¹⁰⁹ ¹¹⁰ [the general meaning being, Allāh knows everything that a person keeps in his mind, yet we do not know and cannot comprehend the *ʿIlm* of Allāh]. **And His statement, free of imperfections is He: 'And your Lord jā'a'**¹¹¹ ¹¹² [with the angels in rows. This āyah is concerned with two things: 1) the coming of the angels on the Day of Judgement, and 2) Allāh will be attendant on that day. One should not ask whether Allāh is with the angels, i.e. being physically with or accompanying them and similar such questions, for these are erroneous things that should not be discussed. On the contrary, one should stick to what Allāh said: 'And your Lord jā'a and the angels in rows'. The general meaning being, that we know that Allāh will be attendant on that day, and we may somehow be able to see Him on that day]. **His statement, Exalted is He: 'Do they then wait for anything other than that Allāh ya'tiya'**¹¹³ **to them'**¹¹⁴ [this āyah is different from the previous āyāt, because Allāh is criticizing the people who are waiting for Allāh and the angels to come to them; as if Allāh

¹⁰⁷ Qurān: 55:27

¹⁰⁸ Qurān: 5:64

¹⁰⁹ Nafs can be translated as '(inner)self'.

¹¹⁰ Qurān: 5:116

¹¹¹ jā'a can be translated as '(he) comes'.

¹¹² Qurān: 89:22

¹¹³ Ya'tiya can be translated as '(he) should come'.

¹¹⁴ Qurān: 2:210

is going to descend from the clouds to them. Allāh rejects this faulty idea and disproves it). **And His statement: 'Allāh is raḍiyā'¹¹⁵ with them, and they are pleased with Him'¹¹⁶** [the general meaning being, Allāh will reward those people]. **And His statement, Exalted is He: 'He will yuḥibū'¹¹⁷ them, and they will love Him'¹¹⁸** [the general meaning of this āyah is identical to the previous one, i.e. He will reward those people and will grant them paradise. The meaning of ḥubb and its translation as 'love' is problematic as it is something that happens in the heart, and comprises of feelings and emotions]. **And His saying, Exalted is He, concerning the disbelievers: 'and the ghaḍab'¹¹⁹ of Allāh is upon them'¹²⁰** [ghaḍab is defined as 'the boiling of the heart out of anger', and here this actual meaning does not suit Allāh and it should therefore not be translated as 'anger'. The general understanding of the āyah is that those people mentioned will be punished by Allāh]. **His saying, Exalted is He: 'That is because they followed what askhaḍa'¹²¹ Allāh.'¹²²** **And His saying, Exalted is He: 'Allāh kariha'¹²³ their being sent forth'¹²⁴** [the general meaning of these āyāt is similar to what is mentioned with regards to the āyah concerning the *Ghaḍab* of Allāh].

From the Sunnaḥ is the statement of the Prophet ﷺ: 'Our Lord, may He be Blessed and Exalted, yanzilu'¹²⁵ to the lowest heaven every night.'¹²⁶ [the common English translation is 'He descends to the lowest heavens', and Allāh is the only one who's help is sought! This implies that Allāh is limited and restricted by the boundaries of the lowest heaven, in that it contains Him. If one says 'yes, this is true', then he is at least being honest, however gravely mistaken in his conviction. If one would

¹¹⁵ Raḍiyā can be translated as '(he) is pleased'.

¹¹⁶ Qurān: 5:119

¹¹⁷ Yuḥibū can be translated as '(he) will love'.

¹¹⁸ Qurān: 5:54

¹¹⁹ Ghaḍab can be translated as 'anger'.

¹²⁰ Qurān: 48:6

¹²¹ Askhaḍa can be translated as '(he) discontented'.

¹²² Qurān: 47:28

¹²³ Kariha can be translated as '(he) disliked'.

¹²⁴ Qurān: 9:46

¹²⁵ Yanzilu can be translated as '(he) descends'.

¹²⁶ Narrated by Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad*, no. 7592 / al-Bukhārī, no. 1145 / Muslim, no. 758.

from it being very clearly stated that *Nuzûl* should not be understood as 'movement', it is also an important statement for it contains proof that the usage of '(its) apparentness', does not mean the literal meaning of the word in this context (i.e. in relation to Allāh and His Attributes); for, Ibn al-Bannā¹²⁷ first rejected the literal meaning (i.e. moving from one place to another), and only later stated that 'to carry it upon its apparent' (ḥamlaha 'alā ḡāhirihi) is permissible; indicating that when the word 'apparent' (ḡāhir) is used, it refers to the wording of the āyah or ḥadīth and not the literal meaning of the word itself¹²⁹.

Certainly, both *yanzilu* and *Nuzûl* have meanings, but they are unknown to us, and Allāh knows best! The general meaning of the āyah indicates that Allāh will have more *Raḥmah* with the people at that time, and will reward them more during it, and the last part of this narration actually implies this general understanding¹³⁰. He ﷺ said: ***'Your Lord ya'jību¹³¹ by the youth who does not possess childish manners.'***¹³² [and this is one of the cases in which it is not entirely clear what the intended overall meaning should be. It could be said that the general meaning of

¹²⁷ Nuzûl can be translated as 'descend'.

¹²⁸ Ibn al-Bannā', *Al-Uṣūl al-Mujarradah*, p. 47.

¹²⁹ A similar conclusion based on the words of Ibn Qudāmah was reached in footnote 55.

¹³⁰ The last part being: *'Is there anyone to invoke Me so that I may respond to his invocation? Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant him his request? Is there anyone seeking My forgiveness so that I may forgive him?'*

¹³¹ Ya'jību can be translated as '(he) is amazed'.

¹³² This wording is transmitted by al-Qaḍā'i in *Musnad al-Shihāb*, vol. 1, no. 576 / Imām Aḥmad reported something similar in *al-Musnad*, no. 17371, albeit with a slightly different wording. A different, yet stronger ḥadīth which affirms this Attribute, is transmitted by al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, no. 488.

the ḥadīth points to Allāh rewarding such a person and elevating him in rank and status. However, there are other general meanings available for it], and his statement ﷺ: *'Allāh yaḍḥak at two men, one of whom kills the other and they both enter Paradise.'*¹³³

This and others [i.e. other āyāt and aḥādīth] **similar to it**, **from those whose chain of narration is authentic** [and give certainty], **and whose reporters are acceptable; We believe in it**, **and do not reject it, nor deny it, nor do we (re)interpret it with interpretation which contradicts its obvious meaning** [meaning, which contradicts the obvious meaning of the whole āyah or narration. Thus, Ibn Qudāmah is talking about understanding the obvious meaning of the whole āyah or narration and not the specific Attribute only. Consequently, twisting the whole meaning of the āyah or ḥadīth to a different meaning is impermissible and unacceptable. Furthermore, the obvious meanings of these narrations are something that most people can understand. Yet, as for the Attributes themselves that are contained in these narrations, then only Allāh knows best what they actually mean]. **We do not make comparisons with the attributes of creations, nor do we use the names** [meanings, features or traits] **(given) by the innovators** [and consequently, when the innovators say something concerning Allāh and His Attributes, the Ḥanābilāh do not accept it. For example, calling Allāh (*al-sāni'ūh*), meaning 'the manufacturer'. Although, this innovated term might not be wrong per se, using it and others similar to it is prohibited]. **And we know that Allāh, Glorified and Exalted is He, has no similar and equal: There is nothing whatsoever like Him. And He is al-Samī'**¹³⁴ **al-Baṣīr**¹³⁵,¹³⁶ **Hence, everything that is imagined by the mind or produced in ones thought, then surly Allāh is different from it** [so, all the imaginations that the human intellect can produce are inherently nothing like Allah].

¹³³ Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad*, no. 7326 / al-Bukhārī, no. 2826 / Muslim, no. 1890.

¹³⁴ Samī' can be translated as 'hearing'.

¹³⁵ Baṣīr can be translated as 'seeing'.

¹³⁶ Qurān: 42:11

And from this is His statement, Exalted is He: *'al-Rahmān istawā over the Throne'*¹³⁷ [in a manner that suits His Majesty¹³⁸], and His statement, Exalted is He: *'Do you feel secure that He who fi al-samā'*¹³⁹ [istawā is something that one must believe in, and when it is said that Allāh is over the heavens one should believe it that. One should definitely not believe that Allāh is physically above the heavens or that there is some kind of distance between Him and the heavens, or something to that effect. The general meaning of these āyāt is to show the greatness of Allāh in relation to His creation. For, the 'Arsh is the biggest creation of all created things, yet Allāh is above that]. And the statement of the Prophet: *'Our Lord is Allah, who is fi al-samā'*! Sanctified be Your Name.¹⁴⁰ [another general meaning one could understand from this is that Allāh is not physically with His creation], also His ﷺ saying to the slave-girl: *'Where is Allāh? She said: fi al-samā'* So he said: *'Set her free, for indeed she is a believer.'*; as reported by Muslim and Mālik b. Anas and others from the imāms¹⁴¹. The Prophet ﷺ said to Ḥusayn

¹³⁷ Qurān: 20:5

¹³⁸ In some 'aqidah works by sects who claim and affirm the literal meanings for the Attributes of Allāh, often the addition 'as it suits His Majesty' (or similar phrases) is found, after first having stated that the Attribute is taken on its literal meaning. They use this additional phrase to avoid falling into anthropomorphism. However, this addition is problematic and does not help in attaining the goal they set out to reach, which is avoiding anthropomorphism. On the contrary, it only further complicates the matter for the 'literal meaning' is always something that is related to the physical created world and comprises of created materials. For example, every yad is comprised of flesh and bones and other created materials. When it is said that this meaning is not intended, then this means that the Attribute is in fact not taken on its 'literal meaning' at all, but on a metaphorical one instead. Thus, when one takes an Attribute of Allāh on its literal meaning it implies linking it to, or resembling it with, the creation. Although differences in shared attributes do occur amongst various creatures, such as the difference between a human hand, the hand of an ape, or the hand of another animal, they do share common factors such as: all being created things and using the hand as a 'tool'. Therefore, the addition 'as it suits His Majesty' does not help to avoid anthropomorphism, comparison and making examples. In actuality, it only further complicates the matter. Such a person, in essence, says that Allāh shares in something with the creation, yet His Attribute is different from the creation because it suits His Majesty, and this is a clear contradiction. Furthermore, Allāh says that 'nothing whatsoever is like Him', and this alone should be enough to divert the Attribute(s) away from their literal meanings. The phrase 'as it suits His Majesty' is on its own not problematic, but only in combination with affirming the literal meaning does it result in a self-contradictory and messy statement.

¹³⁹ Qurān: 67:16

¹⁴⁰ Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad*, no. 23957 / Abū Dawūd, no. 3892.

¹⁴¹ Muslim, no. 537 / Imām Mālik in *al-Muwatta'*, no. 2251/ and others, like: Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad*, no. 23762 / Abū Dawūd, no. 930 / Al-Nasā'ī, no. 1218.

(b. 'Imrān): *How many gods do you worship? He said: 'seven; six in the earth and one fi al-samā'. He ﷺ said: 'Who is it that you hope in and fear?' He said: 'The One that is fi al-samā'. He ﷺ said: 'Then abandon the six and worship the One who is fi al-samā', and I will teach you two supplications.' So, he accepted Islām and the Prophet ﷺ taught him to say: 'Oh Allāh, Grant me guidance and save me from the evil of myself.'*¹⁴² What was reported in the previously revealed books, concerning the signs of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions, is that: They prostrate on the earth while they claim that their god is *fi al-samā*.¹⁴³ Abū Dawūd (d. 275H) reported in his *Sunan* that the Prophet ﷺ said: *Indeed, what is between one level of heaven and (another) level of heaven is a distance of such and such...* He ﷺ continued until he mentioned: *And above that is the Throne. And Allāh, the One free of all defects, is above that.*¹⁴⁴ [yet, He is not physically above that, as He is not confined to place or time].

This and similar to it from what the Salaf, may Allāh have mercy on them, have agreed upon concerning transmission and accepting [of these reports], and not subjecting it to outright rejection nor distorting, comparing or making examples for it [with the characteristics of the creation].

Imām Mālik b. Anas was once questioned, and it was said to him: 'O Abā 'Abd Allāh! The most Merciful *istawā* over the Throne. How is the *istawā*?' So, he [i.e. Imām Malik] responded: **The *istawā* is not unknown** [meaning, that the word is known in the Arabic language. When it is spoken in Arabic, an Arabic speaker will understand what is meant by it; and it means to 'ascend']. **The 'how' is incomprehensible** [meaning, the mind cannot comprehend how this is with regards to Allāh]. **Believing in it is an obligation. And asking concerning it** [meaning, asking about its kayfiyyah (i.e. how it is), its reality or meaning] **is an innovation. Then he commanded someone** [to throw out the questioner], **and he was thrown out.**¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Al-Tirmidhī, no. 3483.

¹⁴³ It is based on the report that Ibn Qudāmah mentions in *Iḥbāt Sifāt al-'Ulūww*, p. 78.

¹⁴⁴ The whole version of the ḥadīth is narrated by Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad*, no. 1770 / Abū Dawūd, no. 4723.

¹⁴⁵ This is a famous and authentic saying from Imām Mālik, and it is narrated through various

وَمِنْ صِفَاتِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى أَنَّهُ مُتَكَلِّمٌ بِكَلَامٍ قَدِيمٍ، يَسْمَعُهُ مِنْهُ مَنْ شَاءَ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ. سَمِعَهُ مُوسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مِنْهُ مِنْ غَيْرِ وَاسِطَةٍ، وَسَمِعَهُ جِبْرِيلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، وَمَنْ أَوْزَنَ لَهُ مِنْ مَلَائِكَتِهِ، وَرُسُلِهِ. وَأَنَّهُ مُنْبَحَاةٌ يُكَلِّمُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ، وَيُكَلِّمُونَهُ، وَيَأْذَنُ لَهُمْ فَيَرْوُونَهُ، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا﴾، وَقَالَ مُنْبَحَاةٌ: ﴿يَا مُوسَى إِنِّي اصْطَفَيْتُكَ عَلَى النَّاسِ بِرِسَالَتِي وَبِكَلَامِي﴾، وَقَالَ مُنْبَحَاةٌ: ﴿مِنْهُمْ مَنْ كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ﴾، وَقَالَ مُنْبَحَاةٌ: ﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَكَلِّمَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ﴾، وَقَالَ مُنْبَحَاةٌ: ﴿فَلَمَّا أَتَاهَا نُوحِي بِهَا مَوْسَى﴾، إِنِّي أَنَا رَبُّكَ، وَقَالَ مُنْبَحَاةٌ: ﴿إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي﴾ وَغَيْرُ جَائِزٍ أَنْ يَقُولَ هَذَا إِلَّا اللَّهُ.

From the Attributes of Allāh is that He is *mutakalim* with *Kalām* that is pre-existent. He causes whomsoever He wills to hear it. Mūsā, peace upon him, heard it from Him without a medium in between. Jibrīl, peace upon him, heard it, as well as whomsoever He permitted from His angels and messengers. He, the One free from all defects, *yukallimu* to the believers in the Hereafter and they will speak to Him. And He will give permission to them, so that they will visit Him. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: 'and Allāh kallama to Mūsā, with actual speech.'¹⁴⁶ And He, free from imperfections, says: 'He said, O Mūsā, I have chosen you above men by My Messages, and by my Kalām.'¹⁴⁷ And He, free of imperfections, says: 'Allāh kallama to some of them.'¹⁴⁸ Allāh, free of imperfections, says: 'It is not for any human being that Allāh yukallima to him unless by Revelation,

reporters, with assorted wordings. An early source for the exact wording mentioned by Ibn Qudāmah is *Aḥdāḥ al-Salaf Ashāb al-Ḥadīth* by al-Ṣābūnī (d. 449H), p. 180-181, and even earlier by Abī al-Shaykh al-Aṣḥabānī (d. 369H) in *Ṭabaqāt al-Muḥaddathin*, vol. 2, p. 214. One of the earliest sources that mentions the report of Imām Mālik is *al-Radd 'alā al-Jaymiyyah*, no. 104, by 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd al-Dārimī (d. 280H); with a slight difference in the order of phrases.

¹⁴⁶ Qurān: 4:164

¹⁴⁷ Qurān: 7:144

¹⁴⁸ Qurān: 2:253

or from behind a veil.¹⁴⁹ And Allāh, free of imperfections, says: 'And when he came to it, he was called by name: O Musa, Verily, I am your Lord...'¹⁵⁰ Allāh, free of imperfections, also says: 'Verily, I am Allāh, None has the right to be worshipped except I, so worship me, and establish the Prayer for My remembrance.'¹⁵¹ It is not permissible for anyone to say this is other than Allāh.

وَقَالَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مَسْعُودٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: إِذَا تَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ بِالْوَحْيِ سَمِعَ صَوْتُهُ أَهْلُ السَّمَاءِ، وَرَوَى ذَلِكَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. وَرَوَى عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ أَنَسٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: ((يَحْشُرُ اللَّهُ الْخَلَائِقَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عُرَاءَ حُفَاةٍ بَيْنَهُمَا فَيَنَادِيهِمْ بِصَوْتٍ يَسْمَعُهُ مَنْ بَعْدَ، كَمَا يَسْمَعُهُ مَنْ قَرَبَ: أَنَا الْمَلِكُ، أَنَا الدَّيَّانُ)) رَوَاهُ الْأَيْمَةُ وَاسْتَشْهَدَ بِهِ الْبُخَارِيُّ.

'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd said, 'When Allāh takallama through revelation, the inhabitants of the Heavens hear His Ṣawt'. He narrated this from the Prophet ﷺ. Also, 'Abd Allāh b. Anis reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: 'Allāh will gather the creatures on the Day of Judgement, naked, barefooted, uncircumcised having nothing with them. He will call to them with a Ṣawt, that those who are far as well as those who are near will hear, (saying:) 'I am al-Malik, I am al-Dayyān.' As narrated by the imāms, and quoted by al-Bukhārī.

وَلَمَّا بَغَضَ الْآثَارُ أَنَّ مُوسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لَيْلَةً رَأَى النَّارَ فَهَائِلَةً، وَفَرَعَ مِنْهَا، فَنَادَاهُ رَبُّهُ: يَا مُوسَى! فَأَجَابَ سَرِعًا اسْتِثْنَاءًا بِالصَّوْتِ، فَقَالَ: لَيْتَكَ لَيْتَكَ! أَسْمَعُ صَوْتَكَ وَلَا أَرَى مَكَانَكَ، فَأَيْنَ أَنْتَ؟ فَقَالَ: أَنَا فَوْقَكَ، وَأَمَانَتُكَ، وَعَنْ يَمِينِكَ، وَعَنْ شِمَالِكَ، فَعَلِمَ أَنَّ هَذِهِ الصَّفَةُ لَا تَتَّبِعِي إِلَّا لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى. قَالَ: كَذَلِكَ أَنْتَ يَا إِلَهِي! أَفَكَلَّا نَكَ أَسْمَعُ أَمْ كَلَامَ رَسُولِكَ؟ قَالَ: بَلَّ كَلَامِي يَا مُوسَى.

¹⁴⁹ Qurān: 42:51

¹⁵⁰ Qurān: 20:11-12

¹⁵¹ Qurān: 20:14

In some narrations, it mentions that: 'one night Mūsā, peace upon him, saw the fire and it overthrew him, so he became frightened by it. Then his Lord called to him, 'O Mūsā!' So, he responded quickly, being familiar with the Ṣawt 'Here I am to serve you! Here I am! I hear Your Ṣawt but I do not see your place. Where are you?' He said, 'I am above you, and I am in front of you, on your left and on your right.' So, he realized that this attribute did not befit anyone except Allāh. He then said, 'You are just as You say, my Lord. Do I hear Your Kalām or the speech of one of Your Messengers? He said, 'No, rather My Kalām, O Mūsā.'

Commentary: The Kalām of Allāh

From the Attributes of Allāh is that He is mutakalim¹⁵² with Kalām¹⁵³ that is pre-existent. He causes whomsoever He wills to hear it [yet, this does not mean that when one hears something that Allāh said, that He has just said it at that particular time. On the contrary, it means that He causes whoever He wills from amongst His creation to hear His Kalām]. Mūsā, peace upon him, heard it from Him without a medium in between. Jibrīl, peace upon him, heard it, as well as whomsoever He permitted from His angels and messengers [here the author establishes two important points. The first being that his Kalām is pre-existent, it has no beginning, just as the rest of His Attributes as the governing principle¹⁵⁴ dictates that: 'Allāh has no beginning, therefore His Attributes have no beginning'. The second being that His Kalām can be heard by whoever He chooses, without the need of a medium]. He, the One free from all defects, yukallimu¹⁵⁵ to the believers in the Hereafter [meaning, that they will hear his Kalām. It does not mean that He initiates new Kalām at that particular moment in time] and they will speak to Him. And He will give permission to them, so that they will visit Him. Allāh, Exalted is He, says:

¹⁵² Mutakalim can be translated as 'speaking'.

¹⁵³ Kalām can be translated as 'speech'.

¹⁵⁴ It was mentioned previously that attributes are related to the essence of something that they are attributed to.

¹⁵⁵ Kallimu can be translated as '(he will) speak'.

'and Allāh kallama¹⁵⁶ to Mūsā, with actual speech.'¹⁵⁷ [meaning that it is actual kalām (kalām ḥaqīqī) which can be heard by His creation. This is contrary to the view that what people hear is the creation of speech (in something else created) brought about by Allāh. How this actual Kalām happens, and what the reality of it is or even how it sounds, is unknown and is consigned to the knowledge of Allah. There is however an accepted narration in which there is mention of a sound resembling a chain being dragged across a rock.¹⁵⁸ Yet, to understand from this that His Kalām makes this sound, or that these chains are His Ṣawt¹⁵⁹ is incorrect. It is merely understood from the narration that this sound is what the angels hear, and it is something that accompanies His actual Kalām] **And He, free from imperfections, says: He said, O Mūsā, I have chosen you above men by My Messages, and by my Kalām.**¹⁶⁰ [and this shows that His Kalām is actually audible, for what would be the advantage of Mūsā hearing the Kalām of Allāh, if it was just something that He created in a tree or in something else? If it was not His actual Kalām, there would be no difference between prophet Mūsā and a person who recites Qurān and through this act hears some of the Kalām of Allāh; as in both cases it would be related to something created, i.e. hearing His Kalām through the created sounds of the reciter, or hearing His Kalām through it being created in a tree. Therefore, the advantage of Mūsā over other men, was by means of him hearing and being directly addressed by His actual Kalām. This does not mean he was the only one who was preferred in this way, for the Prophet ﷺ did hear the Kalām of Allāh directly on particular occasions, and he ﷺ saw Allāh according to the relied upon position of the Ḥanbali madhhab] **And He, free of imperfections, says: 'Allāh kallama to some of them.'**¹⁶¹ **Allāh, free of imperfections, says: It is not for any human being that Allāh yukallima to him unless by Revelation, or from behind a veil.**¹⁶² **And Allāh, free of imperfections,**

¹⁵⁶ Kallama can be translated as '(he) spoke'.

¹⁵⁷ Qurān: 4:164

¹⁵⁸ Abū Dawūd in his *Sunan*, no. 4738.

¹⁵⁹ Ṣawt can be translated as 'voice' or 'sound' depending on the context.

¹⁶⁰ Qurān: 7:144

¹⁶¹ Qurān: 2:253

¹⁶² Qurān: 42:51

the case, and it is in contradiction to what is mentioned in the Qurān, regarding it being in 'clear Arabic' ('arabiyyin mubin). Therefore, this 'clanking' sound is not His *Ṣawt*).¹⁶³ He narrated this from the Prophet ﷺ. Also, 'Abd Allāh b. Anīs reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: 'Allāh will gather the creatures on the Day of Judgement, naked, barefooted, uncircumcised having nothing with them. He will call to them with a *Ṣawt*, that those who are far as well as those who are near will hear, (saying:) *I am al-Mālik*¹⁶⁴, *I am al-Dayyān*¹⁶⁵'.¹⁶⁶ As narrated by the imāms¹⁶⁷, and quoted by al-Bukhārī.¹⁷⁰ [From these aḥādith one understands that Allāh has the Attribute of *Kalām*. It also points to

¹⁶³ Qurān: 20:11-12

¹⁶⁴ Qurān: 20:14

¹⁶⁵ 'Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad in his *Kitāb al-Sunnāh*, no. 536; and this particular wording is also transmitted by Abū Bakr al-Najād (d. 348H) in *al-Radd 'alā man Yaḥqūl al-Qurān Makhlūq*, no. 5 / al-Sijzi (d. 444H) in *Risālah ilā Aḥl Zabīd*, p. 166. Other versions of this narration, with slightly different wordings, i.e. not containing the word '*Ḥis Ṣawt*', are transmitted o.a. by Abū Dawūd in his *Sunan*, no. 4738 / al-Dārimī in *al-Radd 'alā al-Jahmiyyah*, no. 308 / and Ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311H) in *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*, p. 350-357.

¹⁶⁶ Malik can be translated as 'king'.

¹⁶⁷ Dayān can be translated as 'recompencer'.

¹⁶⁸ Imām Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, no. 16042.

¹⁶⁹ Amongst others: Ibn Abū 'Āsim (d. 287H) in *Kitāb al-Sunnāh*, no. 514 / and al-Ḥākim (d. 405H) in *al-Mustadrak*, no. 8778; with a slightly different wording.

¹⁷⁰ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, bk. 97, ch. 32.

another Attribute, namely His *Şawt*, and both are related to each other as the *Kalām* of Allāh is with a *Şawt* (*Kalām Allāh bi-Şawt*). It is also understood from this that His *Kalām* is actual *Kalām* and that He has a *Şawt* that can be heard, although how it actually is or how one may hear it is unknown].

In some narrations, it mentions that [and this particular wording used by the author shows that the narration following it is weak¹⁷¹, although it does not harm to cite such a narration to support the main idea concerning the *Kalām*, i.e. it being actual *Kalām* with a *Şawt* that can be heard. Still, it is redundant to do so because stronger evidences have already been presented]: *'one night Mūsā, peace upon him, saw the fire and it overthrew him, so he became frightened by it. Then his Lord called to him, 'O Mūsā!' So, he responded quickly, being familiar with the Şawt, 'Here I am to serve you! Here I am! I hear Your Şawt but I do not see your place. Where are you?' He said, 'I am above you, and I am in front of you, on your left and on your right.' So, he realized that this attribute did not befit anyone except Allāh. He [i.e. Mūsā] then said, 'You are just as You say, my Lord. Do I hear Your Kalām or the speech of one of Your Messenger [i.e. angels]? He said, 'No, rather My Kalām, OMūsā.'*¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ At certain places in *al-Lum'ah*, and also in other books of *'aqidah* in general, the author cites weak (*da'if*) *ahādith* to support or illustrate a particular issue. The citing of a weak *hadith* does not necessarily mean that the specific issues is baseless if the particular weak *hadith* was non-existent. In the majority of instances, when a weak *hadith* is used it means that the meaning it conveys is at least correct. Therefore, these weak *hadith* should not be dismissed, categorically, because they can convey correct meanings. It is also possible that a stronger *hadith* was transmitted but not mentioned by the author (due to various reasons).

¹⁷² Imām Aḥmad in *Kitāb al-Zuhd*, no. 342, p. 54-56, narrates the complete story about prophet Mūsā; and it is from the *Isra'iliyāt*. Ibn Qudāmah quotes only a small part of it; as did al-Sijzi in *Risalah ild Ahl Zabid*, p. 163.

THE QURĀN IS THE KALĀM OF ALLĀH

وَمِنْ كَلَامِ اللَّهِ سُحْبَانَهُ: الْقُرْآنُ الْعَظِيمُ، وَهُوَ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ الْمُبِينُ، وَخَبْلُهُ الْغَنِيُّ، وَصِرَاطُهُ الْمُسْتَقِيمُ، وَتَنْزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ، عَلَى قَلْبِ سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ، مُنْزَلٌ غَيْرٌ مَخْلُوقٍ، يَمُتُّ بَدَأَ وَإِلَيْهِ يَرْجُؤُ.

From the Kalām of Allāh, is the Glorious Qurān. It is the clear Book of Allāh and His firm Rope. It is His Straight Path and the revelation of the Lord of the universe. The most honourable spirit descended with it to the heart of the best of the Messengers, in a clear Arabic language. It was revealed and not created. From Him it began and to Him it will return.

وَهُوَ سُورٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ، وَأَيَّاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ، وَحُرُوفٌ وَكَلِمَاتٌ مَنْ قَرَأَهُ فَأَعْرَبَهُ فَلَهُ بِكُلِّ حَرْفٍ عَشْرٌ حَسَنَاتٍ. لَهُ أَوَّلٌ وَآخِرٌ، وَأَجْرَاءُ وَأَبْعَاضٌ، مَثَلُو بِالْأَلْفَبَةِ مَحْفُوظٌ فِي الصُّدُورِ، مُشْمُوعٌ بِالْأَدَانِ، مَكْتُوبٌ فِي الْمَصَاحِفِ.

It consists of decisive šūrahs, clear āyāt, letters and words. Whoever recites it and does so properly, will have ten good deeds for every letter he recites. It has a beginning and an end, and it consists of specific sections and parts. It is that which is recited by the tongues, memorized in the hearts, listened to by the ears and written in the maṣāḥif.

فِيهِ مُحْكَمٌ وَمُتَشَابِهٌ، وَنَاسِخٌ وَمُنْسُوخٌ، وَعَاصٍ وَعَامٌّ، وَأَمْرٌ وَنَهْيٌ ﴿لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ﴾، ﴿قُلْ لِّئِنْ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَى أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَفْعَلُوهُ وَلَوْ كَانُوا بِغُسْنِهِمْ لِيُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ ظُهُورُ﴾.

In it are āyāt which are muḥkam (clear) and āyāt which are mutashābih (ambiguous), that which is abrogating and that which is abrogated, that which is specific and that which is general and that which contains

obligation and that which contains prohibition. *'Falsehood cannot approach it from before it or behind. It is sent down by al-Hakim, al-Hamid.'*¹⁷³ 'Say: If mankind and jinn were to gather together to produce the likes of this Qurān, they could not produce the likes thereof, even if they helped one another.'¹⁷⁴

وَمَوْ هَذَا الْكِتَابِ الْعَرَبِي الَّذِي قَالَ فِيهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا: «لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ بِهَذَا الْقُرْآنِ»، وَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ: «إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا قَوْلُ الْبَشَرِ»، فَقَالَ اللَّهُ سُبحَانَهُ: «سَأَصْلِيهِ سَقَرًا»، وَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ: هُوَ شِعْرٌ. فَقَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: «وَمَا عَلَّمْنَاهُ الشِّعْرَ وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ وَقُرْآنٌ مُبِينٌ» فَلَمَّا نَفَى اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّهُ شِعْرٌ وَأَتَتْهُ قُرْآنًا لَمْ يَبْقَ شُبْهَةٌ لِذِي لُبٍّ فِي أَنَّ الْقُرْآنَ هُوَ هَذَا الْكِتَابِ الْعَرَبِي الَّذِي هُوَ كَلِمَاتٌ، وَحُرُوفٌ وَأَيَّاتٌ؛ لِأَنَّ مَا لَيْسَ كَذَلِكَ لَا يَقُولُ أَحَدٌ: إِنَّهُ شِعْرٌ.

This is the Arabic Book of which the disbelievers said concerning it: *'We will never believe in this Qurān.'*¹⁷⁵ And some of them said: *'This is nothing but the word of a human being.'*¹⁷⁶ So, Allāh, free from imperfections, said: *'I will cast him into the Hellfire.'*¹⁷⁷ Some of them said that it was poetry, so, Allāh, Exalted is he, said: *'And We have not taught him poetry, nor it is suitable for him. This is only a reminder and a plain Qurān.'*¹⁷⁸ Thus, when Allāh denies that it is poetry and confirms that it is Qurān, there should not remain any doubt for the one possessing intellect, that the Qurān is that Arabic Book which is composed of words, letters and āyāt. This is because if it were not so, then they would not have claimed it was poetry.

وَقَالَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: «وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّن مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ»، وَلَا يَجُوزُ أَنْ يَتَحَدَّثَهُمُ الْإِنِّيَانِ بِجَنَلٍ مَا لَا يُدْرِي مَا هُوَ وَلَا يُعْقَلُ.

¹⁷³ Qurān: 41:42

¹⁷⁴ Qurān: 17:88

¹⁷⁵ Qurān: 43:31

¹⁷⁶ Qurān: 74:25

¹⁷⁷ Qurān: 74:26

¹⁷⁸ Qurān: 36:69

Allāh, The Mighty and The Sublime, says: 'And if you are in doubt concerning what We have sent down to Our Slave, then produce a ṣūrah the like thereof and call your witnesses besides Allāh.'¹⁷⁹ It is not right for Him to challenge them with producing something that they neither know nor understand.

وقَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿وَإِذَا تَنَزَّلَتْ عَلَيْنَا آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالِ الَّذِينَ لَا يُرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا إِنِّي بِمُزْدَرٍ غَيْرٍ هَذَا أَوْ يَدُلُّهُ قُلٌّ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أُبْدِلَهُ مِنْ تِلْقَاءِ نَفْسِي﴾، فَأَثْبَتَ أَنَّ الْقُرْآنَ هُوَ الْآيَاتِ الَّتِي تَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمْ. وَقَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿بَلْ هُوَ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ فِي صُدُورِ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ﴾.

Allāh, Exalted is He, says: 'And when Our clear āyāt are recited unto them, those who not hope for the meeting with Us, say: Bring us a Qurān other than this, or change it.' Say: It is not for me to change it of my own accord. I only follow that which is revealed unto me.'¹⁸⁰ This confirmed that the Qurān consists of āyāt, which are recited unto them. And He, Exalted is He, says: 'No, but they are clear āyāt that are preserved in the breasts of those who have been given knowledge.'¹⁸¹

وقَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿إِنَّهُ لَقُرْآنٌ كَرِيمٌ • فِي كِتَابٍ مَكْنُونٍ • لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ﴾، بَعْدَ أَنْ أَقْسَمَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ.

And He, the Exalted, says after having sworn upon it: 'That is indeed an honourable Qurān. In a Book well-guarded, which none can touch, except the purified.'¹⁸²

وقَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿كَهَيْعَتِنَا﴾، ﴿حَمِّمَ • عَسَقَ﴾، وَافْتَتَحَ بِشُعَا وَعِشْرِينَ سُورَةَ بِالْحُرُوفِ الْمُقَطَّعَةِ. وَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: ((مَنْ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ فَأَعْرَضَهُ فَلَهُ بِكُلِّ حَرْفٍ مِنْهُ عَشْرُ حَسَنَاتٍ، وَمَنْ قَرَأَهُ وَلَحَنَ فِيهِ فَلَهُ بِكُلِّ حَرْفٍ حَسَنَةٌ))، حَدِيثٌ صَحِيحٌ.

¹⁷⁹ Qurān: 2:23

¹⁸⁰ Qurān: 10:15

¹⁸¹ Qurān: 29:49

¹⁸² Qurān: 56:77-79

وقال عليه الصلاة والسلام: ((اقْرَأُوا الْقُرْآنَ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ قَوْمٌ يُقِيمُونَ حُرُوفَهُ إِقَاءَةَ الشَّهْمِ لَا يُخَارِزُ تَرَاقِيَهُمْ يَتَعَجَّلُونَ أَجْرَهُ وَلَا يَتَأَجَّلُونَهُ)). وقال أبو بكر وعمر رضي الله عنهما: (إِغْرَابُ الْقُرْآنِ أَحْسَبُ إِلَيْنَا مِنْ حِفْظِ بَعْضِ حُرُوفِهِ). وقال علي رضي الله عنه: (مَنْ كَفَرَ بِخَرْبٍ مِنْهُ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ بِهِ كُلَّهُ).

And Allāh, Exalted is He, says: 'Kaf Ha Ya 'Ayn Şad.'¹⁸³ And: 'Ha Mim 'Ayn Sin Qaf.'¹⁸⁴ He begins twenty-nine şūrahs of the Qurān with individually separated letters. The Prophet ﷺ said in an authentic narration: 'Whoever recites the Qurān and recites it properly, there will be ten good deeds for him, for every letter from it. And whoever recites the Qurān and he recites it improperly, there will be one good deed for him for every letter,' and this is an authentic ḥadīth. And he ﷺ said: 'Read the Qurān before there comes to you a people who will straighten its letters like an arrow is straightened; yet, it will not pass their throats. Their reward will be hastened and not postponed.' Abū Bakr and 'Umar said: 'To make 'irāb of the Qurān is more beloved to us than to memorize some of its letters.' 'Alī said: 'Whoever disbelieves in one letter from it; then he has disbelieved in all of it.'

وَاتَّفَقَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ عَلَى عَدِّ سُورِ الْقُرْآنِ وَأَيَاتِهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ وَحُرُوفِهِ. وَلَا خِلَافَ بَيْنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فِي أَنْ مَنْ جَحَدَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ سُورَةً أَوْ آيَةً أَوْ كَلِمَةً أَوْ حَرْفًا مُتَّفَقًا عَلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ كَافِرٌ، وَفِي هَذَا حُجَّةٌ قَاطِعَةٌ عَلَى أَنَّهُ حُرُوفٌ.

The Muslims have agreed on the number of şūrahs, āyāt, words and letters of the Qurān. There is no disagreement amongst the Muslims concerning the disbelief of the one who denies a şūrah, āyah, word or letter from the Qurān, which has been agreed upon. In conclusion, this is conclusive proof that the Qurān consists of letters.

¹⁸³ Qurān: 19:1

¹⁸⁴ Qurān: 41:1

From the Kalām of Allāh, is the Glorious Qurān [as mentioned in the previous section, Allāh is attributed with Kalām, and as is the case with Him and all of His Attributes, it follows that we do not have a full realisation of His Kalām. There are two important issues related to His Kalām. Firstly, the totality of Allāh's Kalām is pre-existent and someone being able to hear it depends upon His Will. Secondly, although we do not know everything about His Kalām, we can know for sure that the Qurān is from His Kalām; as mentioned by the author]. **It is the clear Book of Allāh and His firm Rope. It is His Straight Path and the revelation of the Lord of the universe. The most honourable spirit [i.e. Jibril] descended with it to the heart of the best of the Messengers [and creatures], in a clear Arabic language [therefore, all the general meanings of the Qurān are known]. It was revealed and not created** [thus, Allāh did not create the Qurān, but *kallama* with it, and He does not need a tool to be able to speak]. **From Him it began and to Him it will return** [and the author is referring to an event that will happen before the Day of Judgement. At some point, the Qurān will be taken from the hearts of people and the maṣāḥif¹⁸⁵ and will return back to Allāh such that all the maṣāḥif will be left blank and no one will remember it by heart¹⁸⁶].

It consists of decisive ṣūrahs, clear āyāt, letters and words [meaning, these ṣūrahs, āyāt and words are understandable, some in a specific way and some only in general. The words and letters are

¹⁸⁵ The Mushaf refers to the compiled written Qurān.

¹⁸⁶ A narration with this meaning has been transmitted by al-Dārimī in his *Sunan*, no. 3661, 3663: "Recite the Qurān much before it is taken away." They said, "These maṣāḥif will be taken away! What about that which is (memorized) in men's hearts?" He said: "Something will come and take it one night, and in the morning, they will wake up without it. They will forget the phrase *La ilaha ila Allāh*" and they will start to recite the sayings and poetry of the Jāhiliyyah. That is when the Word will be fulfilled against them."

A similar narration has been transmitted by al-Ṭabarānī in *Mu'jam al-Kabir*, no. 8698: "This Qurān will most certainly be taken away from amongst you. He was asked: 'Oh, Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān, how will it be taken away when it is so firmly rooted in our hearts and it is written in our maṣāḥif?' He said: 'Something will come to it at night, then there will be nothing left of it in people's hearts or in the mushaf, and the next morning the people will be like animals.' Then he recited the āyah: 'And if We willed, We could surely, take away that which We have revealed to you. Then you would find no protector against Us in that respect.'"

known in the Arabic language, and can they be looked up for example in a dictionary]. **Whoever recites it and does so properly** [meaning, with 'irāb], **will have ten good deeds for every letter he recites**¹⁸⁷ [understanding what one says is not a condition for receiving these good deeds as is apparent from the narrations. Merely reciting properly, without understanding, will reward one these good deeds. Something to this effect has been mentioned by Imām Aḥmad¹⁸⁸]. **It has a beginning and an end, and it consists of specific sections and parts. It is that which is recited by the tongues** [thus, the Qurān that Allāh *takallama* with is the same Qurān that is recited by people. However, this does not mean that it can be said that the pronunciation of someone who recites it is the same as when Allāh *takallama* with it, as people pronounce and their pronunciation of it is created, and Allāh does not pronounce like this. Yet, the words people recite are from the *Kalām* of Allāh which is one of His Attributes], **memorized in the hearts, listened to by the ears and written in the maṣāḥif.**

In it are *āyāt* which are *muḥkam* (clear) and *āyāt* which are *mutashābiḥ* (ambiguous), that which is abrogating and that which is abrogated, that which is specific and that which is general and that which contains obligation and that which contains prohibition. *Falsehood cannot approach it from before it or behind. It is sent down by al-Ḥakīm*¹⁸⁹, *al-Ḥamid*¹⁹⁰.¹⁹¹ Say: *If mankind and jinn were to gather together to produce the likes of this Qurān, they could not produce the likes thereof, even if they helped one another.*¹⁹² [and this is the real miracle of the Qurān].

¹⁸⁷ Al-Tirmidhi in his *Sunan*, no. 2910: 'Whoever recites a letter from Allāh's Book, then he receives the reward from it, and the reward of ten the like of it. I do not say that Alif Lam Mim is a letter, but Alif is a letter, Lam is a letter and Mim is a letter.'

¹⁸⁸ Ibn al-Jawzi in *Manāqib al-Imām Aḥmad*, p. 583-584, and the source is al-Khallāl in *al-Majālis al-'Askrāh*, no. 50: 'Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad said: 'I heard my father saying: 'I saw the Lord of Might, Mighty and Majestic is He, in my sleep. I said: 'O Lord, what is the best thing that those who wish to get closer to you can do?' He said: 'To recite my word (Qurān). I said: 'O Lord, with or without understanding it?' He said: 'Yes, with or without understanding.'

¹⁸⁹ Ḥakīm can be translated as 'wise.'

¹⁹⁰ Ḥamid can be translated as 'one who is praised a lot'.

¹⁹¹ Qurān: 41:42

¹⁹² Qurān: 17:88

This is the Arabic Book of which the disbelievers said concerning it; *We will never believe in this Qurān.*¹⁹³ And some of them said: *This is nothing but the word of a human being.*¹⁹⁴ So, Allāh, free from imperfections, said: *I will cast him into the Hellfire.*¹⁹⁵ Some of them said that it was poetry, so, Allāh, Exalted is He, said: *And We have not taught him* [i.e. Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ] *poetry, nor it is suitable for him. This is only a reminder and a plain Qurān.*¹⁹⁶ Thus, when Allāh denies that it is poetry and confirms that it is Qurān, there should not remain any doubt for the one possessing intellect, that the Qurān is that Arabic Book which is composed of words, letters, and āyāt. This is because if it were not so, then they [i.e. the disbelievers] **would not have claimed it was poetry** [if it was in fact poetry, or something created, then the disbelievers would not have had a problem with it. They only claimed it was such because they objected to it being from Allāh, as a part of His *Kalām*. Consequently, Allāh refutes them by saying it is in fact Qurān from Allāh and not something created such as poetry].

Allāh, The Mighty and The Sublime says; *And if you* [i.e. the disbelievers] *are in doubt concerning what We have sent down to Our Slave* [i.e. Muḥammad ﷺ], *then produce a ṣūrah the like thereof and call your witnesses besides Allāh.*¹⁹⁷ [indicating the real miracle of the Qurān is the inability to produce something or even a small part like it, which is understood and known to people] **It is not right for Him to challenge them with producing something that they neither know nor understand** [it is not likely for Allāh to challenge human beings with producing something that is neither known or impossible to be understood by the intellect and herein lies the essence of the miracle. For, if one challenges another to do something oneself did, then it must be something that is known or understood by the other person. Otherwise, it is an unfair challenge. Furthermore, this proves

¹⁹³ Qurān: 43:31

¹⁹⁴ Qurān: 74:25

¹⁹⁵ Qurān: 74:26

¹⁹⁶ Qurān: 36: 69

¹⁹⁷ Qurān: 2:23

that we can understand all of the Qurān although not necessarily every single word, and Allah's Attributes are from those words that are not necessarily understood, even though one can understand enough from them. An example of this is how we can generally understand from Allāh being *al-Khāliq*, that He created the world. Similarly, it is understood from His Attribute *Raḥmah* that by it, people will go to Paradise or will be saved from the torment of Hell. Yet, the literal meanings and realities of these Attributes are unknown].

Allāh, Exalted is He, says; *And when Our clear āyāt are recited unto them, those who not hope for the meeting with Us, say; Bring us a Qurān other than this, or change it.' Say; It is not for me to change it on my own accord. I only follow that which is revealed unto me.*¹⁹⁸ This confirmed that the Qurān consists of [amongst others, those] āyāt, which are recited unto them [meaning, the disbelievers, as they responded to parts of the Qurān being recited to them]. And He, Exalted is He, says: *No, but they are clear āyāt that are preserved in the breasts of those who have been given knowledge.*¹⁹⁹

And He, the Exalted, says after having sworn upon it: *That is indeed an honourable Qurān. In a Book well-guarded, which none can touch, except the purified.*²⁰⁰

And Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *Kaf Ha Ya 'Ayn Šād.*²⁰¹ And: *Ḥa Mīm 'Ayn Sin Qāf.*²⁰² He begins twenty-nine šūrahs of the Qurān with individually separated letters. The Prophet ﷺ said in an authentic narration: *Whoever recites the Qurān and recites it properly, there will be ten good deeds for him, for every letter from it* [and the letters are described as being from the Qurān. Consequently, the Ḥanābilah hold that the *Kalām* of Allāh is with *Šawt* and *ḥarf* and they do not base this on personal *ijtihād*, but rather because there is textual evidence (i.e. naṣṣ) which points to this fact]. *And whoever recites the Qurān and he recites it improperly, there will be one good*

¹⁹⁸ Qurān: 10:15

¹⁹⁹ Qurān: 29:49

²⁰⁰ Qurān: 56:77-79

²⁰¹ Qurān: 19:1

²⁰² Qurān: 41:1

deed for him for every letter'²⁰³ and this is an authentic hadith. And he ﷺ said: *Read the Qurān before there comes to you a people who will straighten its letters like an arrow is straightened; yet, it will not pass their throats* [meaning, they will recite it beautifully, yet what they recite will not reach their hearts and minds (i.e. they do not ponder over its meanings, nor are their hearts affected by it)]. *Their reward will be hasten and not postpone.*²⁰⁴ Abū Bakr and 'Umar said: *To make 'irāb* [meaning, to recite it properly according to the rules of recitation] of the Qurān is more beloved to us than to memorize some of its letters.²⁰⁵ [indicating that good and correct recitation is better than mere memorisation]. 'Alī said: *Whoever disbelieves in one letter from it; then he has disbelieved in all of it.*²⁰⁶ [and the one who denies a single letter of the Qurān becomes a disbeliever immediately. In addition to this, the differences in the authentic qirā'āt should not be used to say that the Qurān is not agreed upon. On the contrary, the statement that the Qurān is agreed upon means that all the authentic qirā'āt are agreed upon, and are mutawātir when it comes to their chains of transmission. The differences between the various qirā'āt originated from the Prophet ﷺ, who received these differences from Jibrīl who in turn received them from Allāh, free of any imperfections and Exalted is He. Furthermore, the different styles of recitation should not be mixed. If there is, for example,

²⁰³ Ibn Qudāmah reported it with this specific wording. Al-Ṭabarānī (d. 260H) transmits in *al-Awsat*, vol. 7, no. 7574, a hadith with a slightly different wording, and perhaps this is the source of that which Ibn Qudāmah transmits. Although, Ibn Qudāmah said regarding it: 'authentic', it is classed as 'very weak' by other scholars. It must be pointed out that a similar, yet more reliable hadith is transmitted by al-Tirmidhī; albeit with a slightly different wording (see footnote. 184). Therefore, the meaning of the narration that Ibn Qudāmah transmits seems to have a basis.

²⁰⁴ Ibn Abī Shaybah (d. 235H) in *al-Musnad*, no. 98, transmits a narration that comes close to the wording used by Ibn Qudāmah. Similar narrations are also transmitted by Imām Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 14855 / Abū Dawūd, *al-Sunan*, no. 830; all, with variations in wording.

²⁰⁵ Ibn al-Anbārī (d. 328H) in *Idāh al-Waḥf wa al-Ibtidā'*, vol. 1, no. 16, 22, transmits it with a slightly different wording.

²⁰⁶ Ibn Qudāmah reports it as a statement from 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. It is found as such in his *Manāzirah fī al-Qurān*, no. 36. Al-Harawī (d. 481H) reports a similar statement from Ibn Mas'ūd in *Dhamm al-Kalām wa Ahlih*, vol. 2, no. 186; as well as various other statements - to the same effect - from other than him. This version from Ibn Mas'ūd is also found in *al-Mujannaf*, no. 16963 of 'Abd al-Razzāq (d. 211H). Ibn Abī Shaybah (d. 235H) reports this statement in his *Mujannaf*, vol. 10, no. 30715, from Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī (d. 96H). It appears such a statement was not uncommon from the Companions and their Followers.

an obligatory madd (lengthening of the vowel) in one qirā'aḥ, it cannot be shortened according to another recitation; and if this is the case when it comes to tajwid, then how about the cases of different letters, words or pronunciations? With regards to the inauthentic qirā'āt, they cannot be used for recitation in the Prayer unless they are mutawātir, nor can they be used for general recitation because they are not considered to be Qurān. According to the relied upon position of the Ḥanābilah, they may be used in tafsir, as a way of explanation and elucidation.]

The Muslims have agreed upon the number of ṣūrahs, āyāt, words and letters of the Qurān [and this is correct from the angle of each mode of recitation (qirā'aḥ) independently, as this depends on which mode is being used. Different modes may have different words, numbers of āyāt, and variations, yet these differences are insignificant and do not detract from the magnificence of the Qurān. There exist some narrations in which Ibn Mas'ūd stated that he did not include the last two ṣūrahs (Mu'awwidhatayn), i.e. ṣūrah al-Falaq and ṣūrah al-Nās, in his version of the Qurān, or that he erased them²⁰⁷. However, 'not including' is not synonymous with, or understood as, him disagreeing with them being from the Qurān. Regarding the narration which states that he 'erased' them, it is shādh (anomalous), and contradicts that which is established through mutawātir narrations]. **There is no disagreement amongst the Muslims concerning the disbelief of the one who denies a ṣūrah, āyah, word or letter from the Qurān, which has been agreed upon. In conclusion, this is conclusive proof that the Qurān is made of letters.**

²⁰⁷ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, no. 21186, 21188.

SEEING ALLĀH IN THE HEREAFTER

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ يَرَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ بِأَبْصَارِهِمْ، وَيُؤَدُّونَهُ، وَيُكَلِّمُهُمْ وَيُكَلِّمُونَهُ، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿وُجُوهٌ يُؤْمِنُ بِرَبِّهَا نَاصِرَةً ۖ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاطِقَةٌ﴾.

The believers will see their Lord in the Hereafter with their own eyes and they will visit Him. He will speak to them and they will speak to Him. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *'(Some) faces on the day will be shiny and radiant. Looking at their Lord.'*²⁰⁸

وَقَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَنْ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَمَحْجُوبُونَ﴾، فَلَمَّا حَجَبَ أُولَئِكَ فِي حَالِ الشَّخْطِ دَلَّ عَلَىٰ أَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَرَوْنَهُ فِي حَالِ الرِّضَىٰ، وَإِلَّا لَمْ يَكُنْ بَيْنَهُمَا فَرْقٌ.

And, Exalted is He, says: *"Nay! Surely, they will be veiled from seeing their Lord that Day."*²⁰⁹ If Allāh is screened from these people during a state in which they are in discontentment, then this indicates that the believers will see Him while being in (the opposite); a state of pleasure. If this were not so, there would be no distinction between the two.

وَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «إِنَّكُمْ سَتَرُونَ رَبَّكُمْ كَمَا تَرَوْنَ هَذَا الْقَمَرَ، لَا تُضَامُونَ فِي رُؤْيَيْهِ». حَدِيثٌ صَحِيحٌ مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ. وَهَذَا تَشْبِيهُ لِلرُّؤْيَةِ بِالرُّؤْيَةِ لَا لِلْمَرْتَبَةِ بِالْمَرْتَبَةِ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى لَا شَبِيهَ لَهُ وَلَا نَظِيرَ.

The Prophet ﷺ said: *'Indeed, you will see your Lord, just as you see this moon. There is no difficulty in your seeing it.'* The ḥadīth is authentic and agreed upon. This statement is a comparison between one manner of seeing and another manner of seeing. It is not a comparison between what is being seen and something else that is being seen, for indeed Allāh has neither comparisons nor equals.

²⁰⁸ Qurān: 75:22-23

²⁰⁹ Qurān: 83:15

The believers will see their Lord in the Hereafter with their own eyes²¹⁰ and they will visit Him. He will speak to them and they will speak to Him. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *(Some) faces on the day will be shiny and radiant. Looking at their Lord.*²¹¹

And, Exalted is He, says: *'Nay! Surely, they [i.e. the evil-doers] will be veiled from seeing their Lord that Day.'*²¹² If Allāh is screened from these people [i.e. the evil-doers] during a state in which they are in discontentment, then this indicates that the believers will see Him while being in (the opposite); a state of pleasure [and as a reward]. If this were not so, there would be no distinction between the two [meaning, if this was the case, the believers and the disbelievers would be the same in this regard, because they would both not see their Lord. And if this was so, why would 'not seeing Him' be expressed as a punishment? This logical evidence shows that 'not seeing Him' is a punishment, and means that 'seeing Him' is due to believers being rewarded].

The Prophet ﷺ said: *'Indeed, you will see your Lord, just as you see this moon. There is no difficulty in your seeing it.'*²¹³ The ḥadīth is authentic and agreed upon. This statement is a comparison between one manner of seeing and another manner of seeing. It is not a comparison between what is being seen and something else that is being seen, for indeed Allāh has neither comparisons nor equals [Allāh will be seen very clearly, but this does not mean nor necessitate Him being seen as He is in reality. For, everything that can

²¹⁰ With regards to the seeing of Allāh by the believers, some related issues include:

1. Can Allāh be seen in this world? The Ḥanābilāh say that He cannot be seen in this world, as is apparent from the story of Mūsā.
2. Did the Prophet see Allāh during the nightly journey and heavenly ascent? According to the relied upon position of the Madhhab, he did see Allāh with his eyes, and not as some say: 'with his heart'.
3. Can one see Allāh in a dream? According to the Ḥanābilāh one can see Allāh in a dream; yet, one cannot see Him as He actually is. This is apparent from the dream of Imām Aḥmad in which he saw Allāh; and it has preceded, and similar narrations are transmitted from other scholars of the Salaf.

²¹¹ Qurān: 75:22-23

²¹² Qurān: 83:15

²¹³ Imām Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 19190 / Al-Bukhārī, no. 573 / Muslim, no. 633.

be seen in this world, is not necessarily seen as it actually is in reality. And when something in this world is seen, as it is in reality, it is not necessarily fully grasped nor understood in its totality.

The notion that Allāh will be seen should not be objected to by claiming it is erroneous because it means one will be able to realise everything about Allāh, and see Him how he actually is. This line of thought is incorrect, for saying that Allāh will be seen, does not necessitate the above conclusion of the objector. Man is a part of creation, thus created and newly occurring (ḥādith), while Allāh is pre-existent. Mankind moving from this world to the next does not bring about a change in this origin. Consequently, man's knowledge will always be restricted and limited and will never be able to comprehend all things or have access to ultimate knowledge i.e. Allāh's *ʿIlm*. Therefore, it will never be possible to see Allāh as He is in reality, for this requires ultimate knowledge which cannot be attained by His creation.

With regards to the seeing of Allāh, the Exalted, (by His creation), it is impossible according to the Mu'tazilah, as Allāh does not exist in a direction for this is something related to bodies (i.e. created beings). However, the Ḥanābilah say that seeing Allāh does not necessarily mean that 'the seeing' is in a specific direction. As is known, the event is authentically narrated from the Prophet ﷺ, and the Ḥanābilah believe in it as such. How this 'seeing of Allāh' will take place is something man should not concern himself with, as it is related to Allāh and He is not confined nor is He related to limits or directions as opposed to His creation which is confined to such things].

THE QAḌĀ* (DIVINE DECREE) AND QADAR (PREORDAINMENT)

ومن صفات الله تعالى أنه القائل لما يريد، لا يكون شيء إلا بإرادته، ولا يخرج شيء عن مشيئته، وليس في العالم شيء يخرج عن تقديره، ولا يصدر إلا عن تديره، ولا مجيد عن القدر المقدور، ولا يتجاوز ما حُطَّ له في اللوح المسطور، أراد ما العالم فاعلوه، ولَوْ عَصَوْهُمْ لَمَّا خالفوه، وَلَوْ شَاءَ أَنْ يُطِيعُوهُ جَمِيعًا لَأَطَاعُوهُ، خَلَقَ الْخَلْقَ وَأَفْعَالَهُمْ، وَقَدَّرَ أَرْزَاقَهُمْ وَأَجَالَهُمْ، يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِرَحْمَتِهِ، وَيُعْزِلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِحُكْمِهِ، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿لَا يُنَالُ عَمَّا يَقَعُ وَهُمْ يُنَالُونَ﴾.

From the Attributes of Allāh, is that He does whatever He wants. Nothing comes to pass, except by His *Iradah* and nothing escapes His *Mashi'ah*. There is nothing in this world that escapes from His *qadar* (preordainment) and nothing comes to pass except with His administration. No one can escape what has been written for him in the Preserved Tablet (*al-lawḥ al-masṭūr* or *al-lawḥ al-maḥfūz*). He wills all that the creation does. Had He made them infallible, they would not disobey Him, and had He willed that they all obey Him, then they would surely obey Him. He created the creation and their actions and He determined their provisions and life-spans. He guides whom He wills by His *Hikmah*. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: '*He cannot be questioned as to what He does, while they will be questioned.*'²¹⁴

وقال الله تعالى: ﴿إِنَّا كُلُّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ﴾، وقال تعالى: ﴿وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقْدَرَهُ تَقْدِيرًا﴾، وقال تعالى: ﴿مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ نَبْرَأَهَا﴾، وقال تعالى: ﴿فَمَنْ يُرِدْ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَفْرَحْ صَدْرُهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَمَنْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا﴾.

²¹⁴ Qurān: 21:23

Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *Verily, We have created all things with qadar.*²¹⁵ And He, the Exalted, says: *He has created everything; and has measured it exactly according to its due measurements.*²¹⁶ Also He, the Exalted, says: *No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves, except that it is in a book; before We bring it into existence.*²¹⁷ And He, the Exalted, says: *Whoever Allāh wills to guide, he opens his breast to Islām. And whoever He wills to send astray, he makes his breast closed and constricted.*²¹⁸

رَوَى ابْنُ عَمَرَ أَنَّ جِبْرِيلَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مَا الْإِيمَانُ؟ قَالَ: «أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ، وَبِالْقَدَرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ»، فَقَالَ جِبْرِيلُ: صَدَقْتَ. انْفَرَدَ مُسْلِمٌ بِإِخْرَاجِهِ. وَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «أَمَنْتُ بِالْقَدَرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ، وَخُلِقَ وَمُؤَرَّ». وَمِنْ دُعَاءِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الَّذِي عَلَّمَهُ الْحَسَنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ يَدْعُو بِهِ فِي قُنُوتِ الرِّزْقِ: «(وَقِنِي شَرَّ مَا قَضَيْتَ)».

Ibn 'Umar reported that Jibril the Prophet ﷺ what imān was, so he responded: *"To Believe in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and the qadar, the good of it and the bad of it."* So, Jibril told him ﷺ: *"You have spoken truthfully."*²¹⁹ as narrated by Muslim. And the Prophet ﷺ said: *"I believe in the qadar, the good of it and the bad of it, the sweet of it and the bitter of it."*²²⁰ One of the supplications that the Prophet ﷺ taught al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī, and which he himself used to supplicate with during the qunūt of witr was: *'And save me from the bad of what You have ordained.'*²²¹

²¹⁵ Qurān: 54:49

²¹⁶ Qurān: 25:2

²¹⁷ Qurān: 57:22

²¹⁸ Qurān: 6:125

²¹⁹ Al-Bukhārī, no. 50 / Muslim, no. 8.

²²⁰ Al-Ḥakīm in *Ma'rifah 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, no. 60, and it is 'weak'. Although, the meaning is established by the preceding narrations of al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

²²¹ Abū Dawūd, no. 1425 / Al-Tirmidhī, no. 464.

وَلَا تَجْعَلْ قِضَاءَ اللَّهِ وَقَدْرَهُ حُجَّةً لَنَا فِي تَرْكِ أَوَامِرِهِ وَارْتِكَابِ نَوَاهِيهِ، بَلْ يَجِبُ أَنْ نُؤْمِنَ وَنَعْلَمَ أَنَّ لِلَّهِ الْحُجَّةَ عَلَيْنَا بِإِثْرَالِ الْكُتُبِ، وَبَعَثِ الرُّسُلِ، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿إِنَّمَا يَكُونُ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بِغَدْرِ الرُّسُلِ﴾.

We do not use the qadā' (Divine decree) of Allāh and His qadar as an excuse for us to abandon following His commandments or failing to observe His prohibitions. On the contrary, we are obligated to believe in (it) and know that Allāh has established proof against us by revealing the Scriptures and sending the Messengers. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *In order that mankind shall have no excuses against Allāh after the Messengers.*²²²

وَنَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ مُبْحَاثُهُ مَا أَمَرَ وَنَهَى إِلَّا الْمُسْتَطِيعُ لِلْفِعْلِ وَالْفَرْكِ، وَأَنَّهُ لَمْ يُجْبِرْ أَحَدًا عَلَى مَعْصِيَةٍ، وَلَا اضْطَرَّهُ إِلَى تَرْكِ طَاعَةٍ، وَقَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿لَا يَكُلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا﴾، وَقَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ﴾،

We know that Allāh, the One free of imperfections, did not command or forbid anyone, except the one who is capable to do what is commended or avoid what is forbidden. He did not compel anyone to commit acts of disobedience (to Him) nor has He forced anyone to abandon obedience to Him. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *Allāh has not given any soul a responsibility, except that He has given it the ability (to carry it out).*²²³ And He, the Exalted, says: *So fear Allāh as much as you are able.*²²⁴

وَقَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ لَا ظُلْمَ الْيَوْمَ﴾. فَذَلَّ عَلَى أَنَّ لِلْعَبْدِ فِعْلًا وَكَسْبًا يُجْزَى عَلَى حَسَبِهِ بِالثَّوَابِ، وَعَلَى سَبْيِهِ بِالْعِقَابِ، وَهُوَ وَاقِعٌ بِقِضَاءِ اللَّهِ وَقَدْرِهِ.

²²² Qurān: 4:165

²²³ Qurān: 2:286

²²⁴ Qurān: 64:16

And He, the Exalted, says: *This Day every person will be recompensed for what he earned. There will be no injustice (upon anybody in their judgement) on that Day.*²²⁵ This indicated that every servant possesses actions and earnings; he will be recompensed for his good deeds with reward and for his bad deeds with punishment. This will occur by the qadā' of Allāh and His qadar.

Commentary: The Qadā (Divine Decree) and Qadar (Preordainment)

From the Attributes of Allāh, is that He does whatever He wants. Nothing comes to pass, except by His *Irādah*²²⁶ and nothing escapes His *Mashi'ah*²²⁷. There is nothing in this world that escapes from His qadar (preordainment) and nothing comes to pass except with His administration. No one can escape what has been written for him in the Preserved Tablet (*al-lawḥ al-maṣṭūr* or *al-lawḥ al-mahfūz*) (at this point it is appropriate to mention that the scholars discussed and differentiated between two things: 1) Allāh's *ʿilm* that such-and-such will happen, and 2) His Divine Decree that such-and-such a thing will happen.

With regards to preordainment, there is a ḥadīth which states that it may be possible for a supplication to alter the preordainment of Allāh.²²⁸ A question arises regarding how this can be understood. It must be known that sometimes the qadā' and qadar are written (on the preserved tablet) in a particular way, yet Allāh knows it will change. Therefore, it appears that in essence there are two types of qadar: 1) a type that will never be changed, and 2) a type that can change. It must be stressed that this does not mean His *ʿilm* changes from a state of not-knowing or ignorance to knowing, when a particular event occurs. Or,

²²⁵ Qurān: 40:17

²²⁶ *Irādah* can be translated as the 'desire (to do something)'.

²²⁷ *Mashi'ah* can be translated as 'will'.

²²⁸ Al-Tirmidhi in his *Sunan*, no. 2139: 'Nothing turns back the Decree except supplication, and nothing increases the life-span except righteousness.' Also, al-Bukhārī, no. 2067, and Muslim, no. 2557, both transmit a ḥadīth in which it states that keeping good relations with one's family will have one's provision and life extended, which may also indicate the preordainment being changed.

that He knew something and then what He knew changed. Allāh is far exalted above this. His *ʿIlm* is absolute in that He knows everything in detail before and as it occurs, and even if something, by His will, did not occur, He knows what would have happened if it did occur. His *ʿIlm* is nothing like our knowledge, which is related to our senses and is in fact fallible. For example, if someone is in a desert and sees water from a distance, only to realise later when moving closer that there was no water. Allāh's *ʿIlm* is not like this, He does not make mistakes in His *ʿIlm*, nor does He learn new things as events unfold; meaning His *ʿIlm* does not update. Returning to the type of qadar that may change, that may be written in *al-lawḥ al-maḥfūz* or may be given to some angels, such as the angel of Death. This angel knew what was in the qadar of prophet Mūsā, yet when he went to Mūsā he could not take his soul, and this indicates that there is another preordainment according to Allāh and this took the form of the choice that was given to prophet Mūsā by which he was allowed to pass his hand over the back of an ox, and to live one extra year for every hair that he touched on the ox's back.

In summary, there is one type of *qaḍāʾ*²²⁹ and two types of qadar. One should also know that with regards to the *lawḥ al-maḥfūz*; not everything that will happen has been written in it, as this would imply that something created is able to contain and limit one of Allāh's Attributes, in this case His *ʿIlm*, which is impossible]. **He wills all that the creation does** [e.g. He wills that someone goes on a vacation, or that a baby cries, or that someone's car is in a good or bad state, or that someone gets sick or dies. For this reason, the great Ḥanbali scholar al-Kalwadhānī (d. 510H) says, in a beautiful poem: 'if Allāh did not will something, yet that thing happened; it would be a deficiency (in Him)'²²⁹, as this would result in questioning Him as a God. For, how can He not will something yet it still happens, and vice versa. Allāh is far removed from this type of deficiency. This erroneous position was held by the Mu'tazilah who stated that people create their own evil actions and that these are not willed by Allāh. We seek refuge with Allāh from this type of speech]. **Had He made them infallible, they would not disobey Him, and**

²²⁹ Al-Kalwadhānī, *al-Qaṣṣṭ al-Dalīyyah*, line 29.

had He willed that they all obey Him, then they would surely obey Him. He created the creation and their actions and He determined their provisions and life-spans. He guides whom He wills by His *ḥikmah*²³⁰. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *He cannot be questioned as to what He does, while they will be questioned.*²³¹ [therefore, one may not question Allāh's decisions and determinations, by saying 'why did Allāh decide to do so-and-so'. However, it is permissible to ask why a certain thing happened. Regarding the permissible type of questions, it must be pointed out that in relation to the issue of cause and effect, there is a difference between the 'metaphorical reason' and the 'real reason'. Reasons, other than 'Allāh willed it' that may be given in response to the question of why something happened, are only of a metaphoric nature, however in all cases and in reality, the real reason is always that it was the will of Allāh. For example, when someone is sick and takes medication to cure him or herself, the medication that is taken is the metaphorical reason, while the real reason for the cure is in fact and reality that Allāh cures. In the same way, it is in reality not the fire that burns, but Allāh that burns, and it is not the knife that cuts, but Allāh that cuts. Therefore, the knife may be as sharp as it can be, it will not cut anything as long as Allāh does not wills it to cut. It would however be very confusing and chaotic for people if fire randomly burned or did not burn, or a very sharp knife cuts at one time yet is not able to cut at other times, and so Allāh created and assigned patterns in these things, and this is from the Sunnah of Allāh (i.e. His way or His pattern) in His created universe. Allāh said in the Qurān that His Sunnah is not changeable²³². So, fire will always (or as expected) burn, and a sharp knife will always (or as expected) cut. If there is an exception, it may be called a miracle, such as when Allāh ordered the fire to be gentle to prophet Ibrāhīm, and it did not burn him when he was cast into it as was mentioned in the Qurān²³³.

Lastly, with regards to things that Allāh willed to happen, the Ḥanābilāh state that not all of His actions necessitate benefit of some sort. In this the Ḥanābilāh again opposed the Mu'tazilāh, who stated that

²³⁰ *Ḥikmah* can be translated as 'wisdom'.

²³¹ Qurān: 21:23

²³² See sūrah Fāṭir (Qurān: 35:43): 'but you will not find any alteration in the way of Allāh...'

²³³ See sūrah al-Anbiyā' (Qurān: 21:69): 'O fire! be coolness and safety upon Abraham...'

Allāh is obligated to do the best or the most beneficial thing. On the contrary, it is as the author mentioned, Allāh does whatever He wants].

Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *Verily, We have created all things with qadar.*²³⁴ And He, the Exalted, says: *He has created everything; and has measured it exactly according to its due measurements.*²³⁵ [and only Allāh knows its measurements, for they are His measurements. The measurements and standards other than His are not taken into consideration. Some of the measurements of Allāh are known to certain degrees and can be utilised by His creation, such as His shari'ah. Yet, the knowledge of His measurements is extremely limited] Also He, the Exalted, says: *No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves, except that it is in a book; before We bring it into existence.*²³⁶ And He, the Exalted, says: *Whoever Allāh wills to guide, he opens his breast to Islām. And whoever He wills to send astray, he makes his breast closed and constricted.*²³⁷

Ibn 'Umar reported that Jibrīl asked the Prophet ﷺ what imān (faith) was, so he responded: *'To Believe in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, The Last Day and the qadar, the good of it and the bad of it.'* So, Jibrīl told him ﷺ: *'You have spoken truthfully.'*²³⁸ as narrated by Muslim. And the Prophet ﷺ said: *I believe in the qadar, the good of it and the bad of it, the sweet of it and the bitter of it.*²³⁹ One of the supplications that the Prophet ﷺ taught al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī (d. 51H), and which he himself used to supplicate with during the qunūt of witr was: *'And save me from the bad of what You have ordained.'*²⁴⁰

We do not use the qaḍā' (Divine Decree) of Allāh and His qadar as an excuse for us to abandon following His commandments [by saying, for example, Allāh willed that I did not pray 'Asr] or failing to observe His prohibitions [by saying, for example, Allāh willed that I

²³⁴ Qurān: 54:49

²³⁵ Qurān: 25:2

²³⁶ Qurān: 57:22

²³⁷ Qurān: 6:125

²³⁸ Imām Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 191 / Al-Bukhārī, no. 50 / Muslim, no. 8.

²³⁹ al-Ḥakīm in *Ma'rifaḥ 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, no. 60 / al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, no. 13581; it is 'weak'. Although, the meaning has a basis in the preceding narrations.

²⁴⁰ Imām Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 1717 / Abū Dawūd, no. 1425 / Al-Tirmidhī, no. 464.

commit this sin]. On the contrary, we are obligated to believe in (it) and know that Allāh has established proof against us by revealing the Scriptures and sending the Messengers. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *In order that mankind shall have no excuses against Allāh after the Messengers.*'

We know that Allāh, the One free of imperfections, did not command or forbid anyone, except the one who is capable to do what is commended or avoid what is forbidden. He did not compel anyone to commit acts of disobedience (to Him) nor has He forced anyone to abandon obedience to Him²⁴¹. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *'Allāh has not given any soul a responsibility, except that He has given it the ability (to carry it out).*'²⁴² And He, the Exalted, says: *'So fear Allāh as much as you are able.*'²⁴³

And He, the Exalted, says: *This Day every person will be recompensed for what he earned. There will be no injustice (upon anybody in their judgement) on that Day.*'²⁴⁴ This indicates that every servant possesses actions [meaning, one can do things according to one's choice. Therefore, one cannot say 'I did not do, but, Allāh did'. Of course, ultimately it was Allāh's doing, but according to ones doing and choice²⁴⁵] and earnings [meaning, one deserved a particular thing to happen according to his action]; **he will be recompensed for his good deeds with reward and for his bad deeds with punishment. This will occur by the qaḍā' of Allāh and His.**

²⁴¹ It can be mentioned here that the *Irādah* of Allāh is of two types: 1) universal *Irādah* (kawnl) and legislative *Irādah* (shar'). The difference between both types is that the former necessitates that what is decreed by Allāh will occur, yet it does not necessarily mean that it is something beloved to Him. While the later type is that which is desired and loved by Allāh, yet this does not mean that it will necessarily occur. To give an example of the universal *Irādah* would be His saying: *'And whoever Allāh desires (i.e. wills) to guide, He opens his breast to Islām. And whoever He desires (i.e. wills) to send astray, He makes his breast closed and constricted'* (Qurān: 6:125). Or, the fact that He created Shaytān, yet He hates him (i.e. Shaytān). An example of the legislative type would be His saying: *'Allāh desires (i.e. loves) to accept your repentance'* (Qurān 4:27). Him desiring this repentance, does not necessitate that everybody repents, for people may or may not repent. Likewise, his command to pray, yet, people may or may not pray based on their obedience or disobedience.

²⁴² Qurān: 2:286

²⁴³ Qurān: 64:16

²⁴⁴ Qurān: 40:17

²⁴⁵ It must be stressed that this does not mean Allāh only acted after or at the same time one made the choice to act. On the contrary, Allāh already knows the choices and doings of every person before they choose and do it.

THE REALITY OF IMĀN

وَالْإِيمَانُ قَوْلٌ بِاللِّسَانِ وَعَمَلٌ بِالْأَرْكَانِ وَعَقْدٌ بِالْجَنَانِ، يَرِيدُ بِالطَّاعَةِ وَيَنْقُصُ بِالْعِصْيَانِ.
قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿وَمَا أَمُرُوا إِلَّا لِیُعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّینَ حُنَفَاءَ وَیُقِیْمُوا الصَّلَاةَ
وِیُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَٰلِكَ دِینُ الْقَیِّمَةِ﴾، فَجَعَلَ عِبَادَةَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى وَإِخْلَاصَ الْقَلْبِ، وَإِقَامَ
الصَّلَاةِ، وَإِنَاءَ الزَّكَاةِ، كُلُّهُ مِنَ الدِّینِ.

Imān (faith) is a statement on the tongue, an action of the limbs and belief in the heart. It increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience. Allāh, the Exalted, says: *'And they were commanded not, except that they should worship Allāh alone, making the Religion sincere to Him, and establish the Prayer, and give the Zakāt, and that is the right religion.'*²⁴⁶ So, He made the worship of Allāh the Exalted, the sincerity of the heart, the establishment of prayer and the giving of Zakāh, all as being from the Religion.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «(الْإِيمَانُ بِضْعٌ وَسَبْعُونَ شُعْبَةً، أَغْلَاهَا شَهَادَةُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَأَدْنَاهَا إِمَاطَةُ الْأَذَى عَنِ الطَّرِيقِ)». فَجَعَلَ الْقَوْلَ وَالْعَمَلَ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ.
وَقَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿فَرَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا﴾، وَقَالَ: ﴿لِيَزَادُوا إِيمَانًا﴾. وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «(يَخْرُجُ مِنَ النَّارِ مَنْ قَالَ: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ. وَفِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ أَوْ خَرَدَلَةٌ أَوْ ذَرَّةٌ
مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ)» فَجَعَلَهُ مُتَفَاعِلًا.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: *'Imān consists of more than seventy branches. The highest of them is to testify that: 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh'. And the lowest of them is removing a harmful object from the road.'* The Prophet ﷺ made speech and action part of Imān. Allāh, the Exalted, says: *'it has increased their imān'*²⁴⁷ And He says: *'In order that may grow more in imān.'*²⁴⁸ The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

²⁴⁶ Qurān: 98:5

²⁴⁷ Qurān: 9:124

²⁴⁸ Qurān: 48:4

'Whoever says, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh' and he has in his heart imān, the weight of a wheat grain, or a mustard seed or an atom, will be extracted from the Hellfire.' Therefore, he made it of different levels.

Commentary: The Reality of Imān

Imān (faith) is a statement on the tongue, an action of the limbs and belief in the heart [for the Ḥanābilāh imān is threefold: speech, actions and belief. Yet, it must be pointed out that imān does not rely on three pillars. In essence its pillars are the belief in the heart and the uttering of the testimony of faith (shahādah), as long as there is nothing that prevents one from saying it. Furthermore, the discussion concerning actions being a pillar of imān, meaning one becomes a disbeliever unless one performs actions, is an innovation in itself, regardless of the conclusion that is reached. Apart from this, it is correct to say, as is stated by Ibn Qudāmah and other scholars, that imān manifests itself in three ways: 1) belief in the heart, 2) utterance on the tongue and 3) actions of the limb. So, it does in fact consist of three realities.

Thus, the pillars of imān are: 1) the belief in the heart, and 2) the testimony of faith upon the tongue, and this should translate into actions. However, action itself is not a pillar of imān and does not determine whether one is a believer or a disbeliever. Naturally, some actions will have this effect, for example, intentionally desecrating the Qurān by throwing it into a toilet, or the action of apostasy or rejecting the Prayer (provided certain conditions are met). Although, in reality what determines kufr, is the intention that preceded the act even if it is not followed by the actual action itself. This shows that the matter wholly concerns what is in the heart, and although action is a part of imān, it is not a condition for, or a pillar of it]. **It increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience** [and this is the Ḥanbalī 'aqīdah, that is found with its scholars, and is line what Imām Aḥmad said²⁴⁹]. **Allāh, the Exalted, says: 'And they were commanded not, except that they should worship Allāh alone, making the Religion sincere to Him, and**

²⁴⁹ See *Uṣūl al-Sunnah* by Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, p. 9. / *al-Khallāl, al-Sunnah*, no. 1002, 1010.

*establish the Prayer, and give the Zakāt, and that is the right religion.*²⁵⁰

So, He made the worship of Allāh the Exalted, the sincerity of the heart, the establishment of prayer and the giving of Zakāh, all as being from the Religion [so, action is required even if it be slight. And even the one who does not pray can be a Muslim, because there is no takfir before he is called to pray by the ruler or his deputy, which can be a qualified judge or someone with religious authority licensed by the ruler. If he refuses, there are particular implications according to the laws of fiqh²⁵¹, but he may in fact still be considered Muslim according to Allāh, even if he was announced to be a disbeliever by the judge. It is important to keep in mind that there is a difference between the ruling of Allāh in fact and reality, and the worldly ruling applied by and between people].

²⁵⁰ Qurān: 98:5

²⁵¹ In the commentary to *ʿUmdah al-Ṭalib*, Shaykh Yūsuf b. Šādiq states the following (the original text is bold, and its commentary is given between brackets [...]):

If someone rejects its obligation [meaning, insists on rejecting the obligation of the Prayer, by saying it is only recommended or merely something good to do; or, when someone actually prays all of the prescribed prayers, yet maintains they are not obligatory], **he has disbelieved** [however, this verdict is only given by scholars and should not be carried out by layman; for the person in question may have an excuse which should be dealt with first. Furthermore, when this person eventually becomes a disbeliever, it does not mean he is executed immediately, for it may be that this person has not even become a Muslim yet, as he may not be aware of essential information which led him to the original rejection. Only when this person has no excuse and insists in rejecting the obligation of prayer does he become an apostate-disbeliever; but this should be established by a competent judge] **also a person who leaves it [i.e. prayer] out of laziness [or indifference], when he is called by the imām** [meaning, the caliph or ruler] **or his deputy and he rejects until the second [prayer] time** [meaning, the person who is called by the ruler or his deputy to pray, for example, Zuhr prayer; but he does not pray it during its time period. Then 'Asr time enters and during it he still does not pray Zuhr; until the remaining time of the 'Asr is too short to include both prayers. In other words, this person is kept until the second prayer's time becomes too short to be able to pray the two prayers. If this is the case, then the ruler or his deputy may announce this person to be a disbeliever and imprison him for three days and nights], **and [during it] he** [the one who rejects the obligation of prayer or the one who leaves it (i.e. does not perform it)] **is called to repent for three days** [during these days scholars are sent to him in order to convince him to repent and he is called to prayer every time the prayer time enters. His repentance is by praying, either in public or in private, depending on the situation. Qāḍi Abū Ya'la stated that a way to convince someone may be by beating him. Consequently, if he does not repent and does not pray within these three days, a state execution may occur].

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: *Imān consists of more than seventy branches. The highest of them is to testify that: 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh.' And the lowest of them is removing a harmful object from the road.*²⁵² [and this means that imān can be translated into actions (i.e. actions can indicate the existence of faith)] The Prophet ﷺ made speech and action part of imān. Allāh, the Exalted, says: *it has increased their imān.*²⁵³ And He says: *In order that they may grow more in imān.*²⁵⁴ The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: *'Whoever says, None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh' and he has in his heart imān, the weight of a wheat grain, or a mustard seed or an atom, he will be extracted from the Hellfire.*²⁵⁵ Therefore, he made it [meaning, imān] of different levels.

²⁵² This version is from Ibn Hibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, no. 193 / other versions are narrated o.a. by Imān Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 9748 / al-Tirmidhī, no. 2614.

²⁵³ Qurān: 9:124

²⁵⁴ Qurān: 48:4

²⁵⁵ Imām Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 12772 / al-Bukhārī, no. 44 / Muslim, no. 193.

THE OBLIGATION TO BELIEVE IN WHAT THE MESSENGER HAS INFORMED US OF

وَجِبَ الْإِيمَانُ بِكُلِّ مَا أَخْبَرَ بِهِ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَصَحَّ بِهِ النَّفْلُ عَنْهُ فِيمَا شَاعَرْنَاهُ أَوْ غَابَ عَنَّا، نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ حَقٌّ وَصِدْقٌ، وَسَوَاءٌ فِي ذَلِكَ مَا عَقَلْنَاهُ وَجَهَلْنَاهُ، وَلَمْ نَطَّلِعْ عَلَى حَقِيقَةِ مَعْنَاهُ، يَفْلُ حَدِيثُ الْإِسْرَاءِ وَالْمِعْرَاجِ وَكَانَ يَقْطَعُ لَا مَنَامًا، فَإِنَّ قُرَيْشًا أَنْكَرَتْهُ وَأَخْبَرَتْهُ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ تُنْكِرُ الصَّامِتَ. وَمِنْ ذَلِكَ أَنَّ مَلَكَ الْمَوْتِ لَمَّا جَاءَ إِلَى مُوسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لِيَقْبِضَ رُوحَهُ لَعَلَّمَهُ فَقَفَا عَيْنَهُ، فَرَجَعَ إِلَى رَبِّهِ فَرَدَّ عَلَيْهِ عَيْنَهُ.

We are obligated to have faith in everything that the Prophet ﷺ informed us of and in what has been authentically transmitted from him, concerning that which we ourselves witnessed or that which we were absent from. We know that it is reality and truth. There is no difference in these matters between that which we can understand and that which we may be ignorant of and have not come to know the reality of its meaning. An example of this is the narration concerning the Isrā' and Mi'rāj (Nightly Journey and Heavenly Ascension), during which he was awake and not dreaming; for indeed Quraysh denied it and considered it something incredible, and they did not deny dreams. Another example is when the Angel of Death approached Mūsā, peace upon him, in order to take his soul. He struck him and gouged out his eye, so he returned to his Lord who gave him his eye back.

وَمِنْ ذَلِكَ أَشْرَاطُ السَّاعَةِ، يَفْلُ خُرُوجِ الدَّجَالِ، وَتُرُولِ عِيسَى بْنِ مَرْيَمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَيَقْتُلُهُ، وَخُرُوجِ تَاجُوجٍ وَمَاجُوجَ، وَخُرُوجِ الدَّابَّةِ، وَطُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ مِنْ مَغْرِبِهَا، وَأَشْيَاءُ ذَلِكَ مِمَّا صَحَّ بِهِ النَّفْلُ.

And from those things are the Signs of the Hour, such as: the emergence of the Dajjāl; the decent of 'Isā b. Maryam, peace upon him, who will then kill him; the emergence of Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj; the emergence of the Beast; the rising of the sun from the West, and what is similar to these things from what has been authentically reported.

وَعَذَابُ الْقَبْرِ وَنَعِيمُهُ حَقٌّ، وَقَدْ اسْتَعَاذَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مِنْهُ، وَأَمَرَ بِهِ فِي كُلِّ صَلَاةٍ. وَفِتْنَةُ الْقَبْرِ حَقٌّ، وَسُؤَالُ مُنْكَرٍ وَنَكِيرٍ حَقٌّ، وَالْبَغْثُ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ حَقٌّ وَذَلِكَ حِينَ يَنْفُخُ إِسْرَافِيلُ عَلَيَّهِ السَّلَامُ فِي الصُّورِ: «فَإِذَا هُمْ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَنْسِلُونَ».

The Punishment and Pleasure of the grave are true. The Prophet ﷺ would seek refuge from it, and he commanded that this be done in every prayer. The fitnah (Trial) of the grave is true. The questions of Munkar and Nakir are true. The Resurrection after death is true and it will occur when Isrāfīl, peace upon him, blows the Trumpet: *'And behold from the graves they will come out quickly to their Lord.'*²⁵⁶

وَيُخْشَرُ النَّاسُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ خُفَاءَ عُرَاءَ مُرَلًّا يُهْمَا فَيَقِفُونَ فِي مَوْقِفِ الْقِيَامَةِ، حَتَّى يَخْلَعَ فِيهِمْ نَبِيُّنَا مُحَمَّدٌ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَيُحَاسِبُهُمُ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى، وَتَنْصَبُ الْمَوَازِينُ، وَتَنْشَرُ الدُّوَابِرُ، وَتَنْطَايِرُ صَحَائِفُ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى الْأَيْمَانِ وَالشَّمَائِلِ «فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوْتِيَ كِتَابَهُ يَمِينِهِ • فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ جِسَابًا بَسِيرًا • وَيُنْقَلِبُ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ مَشْرُورًا • وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوْتِيَ كِتَابَهُ شِمَالًا • فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُو ثُبُورًا • وَيَصْلَى سَعِيرًا».

Mankind will be gathered on the Day of Judgement, barefoot, naked, uncircumcised, and having nothing with them. They will stop at the final place of standing, until our Prophet ﷺ intercedes for them and Allāh, blessed and exalted is He, calls them all to give account for their deeds; then the Scales will be erected, the records will be distributed and the books of the deeds will be dispersed into the right and left hands: *'Then as for him who will be given his record in his right hand, he surely*

will receive an easy reckoning. And will return back to his family in joy!
But whoever is given his record behind his back (or in his right hand), he
will invoke (for his) destruction. And he shall enter the Blazing Fire and
(he shall be) made to taste its burning flames.²⁵⁷

وَالْمِيزَانَ لَهُ كَيْفَانٍ وَلِسَانٌ، تُوزَنُ بِهِ أَعْمَالُ الْعِبَادِ ﴿فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ
الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾ وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فِي جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ.

The mizān (Balance) has two scales and a tongue, by which the deeds
are weighed: Then those whose Balance (of good deeds) are heavy, they are
the successful. And those whose Balance (of good deeds) are light, they are those
who lose their own selves, in Hell will they abide (forever).²⁵⁸

وَلَيْسَاءَ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ خَوْضٌ فِي الْقِيَامَةِ مِائَةٌ أَشَدُّ نِيعًا مِنَ اللَّبَنِ، وَأَخْلَى
مِنَ الْعَسَلِ، وَأَنَابِقُهُ عَدَدُ نُجُومِ السَّمَاءِ، مَنْ شَرِبَ مِنْهُ شَرْبَةً لَمْ يَظْمَأْ بَعْدَهَا أَبَدًا.

For our Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ is the ḥawḍ (Basin) on the Day of
Resurrection; its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. Its
drinking vessels are as numerous as the stars in the sky. Whoever drinks
of it, will never again experience thirst.

وَالصِّرَاطُ حَقٌّ يَجُوزُهُ الْأَبْرَارُ، وَيَرِلُّ عَنْهُ الْفُجَّارُ.

The sirāṭ (Bridge) is true. The righteous people will cross it and the
evil ones will fall from it.

وَيُشْفَعُ نَبِيُّنَا صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِيمَنْ دَخَلَ النَّارَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ فَيَخْرُجُونَ
بِشَفَاعَتِهِ بَعْدَ مَا اخْتَرَقُوا وَصَارُوا فَحْمًا وَحُمَمًا، فَيَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ بِشَفَاعَتِهِ. وَلِسَانُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ
وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ شَفَاعَاتٌ، قَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿وَلَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنِ ارْتَضَى وَهُمْ مِنَ
خَشْيَتِهِ مُشْفِقُونَ﴾. وَلَا تَنْفَعُ الْكَافِرَ شَفَاعَةُ السَّابِقِينَ.

²⁵⁷ Qurān: 84:7-12

²⁵⁸ Qurān: 23:102-103

Our Prophet ﷺ will intercede for whoever enters the Fire from the people of his Ummah who have committed major sins. They will come out of it due to his shafā'ah (Intercession), but only after having been burned until they became ashes and charcoal. They will then enter Paradise due to his intercession. Intercession will also be done by the rest of the Prophets, believers and Angels. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *And they cannot intercede except for him with whom He is pleased. And they stand in awe for fear of Him.*²⁵⁹ The intercession of the intercessors will be of no avail to the disbelievers.

وَالْجَنَّةُ وَالنَّارُ مَخْلُوقَتَانِ لَا تَفْنَيَانِ، فَالْجَنَّةُ مَأْوَى أَوْلِيَائِهِ، وَالنَّارُ عِقَابٌ لِأَعْدَائِهِ، وَأَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ فِيهَا مُخَلَّدُونَ. «إِنَّ الْمُجْرِمِينَ فِي عَذَابٍ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ * لَا يُفْتَرُ عَنْهُمْ وَهُمْ فِيهِ مُبْلِسُونَ».

Jannah and Nār (Paradise and Hellfire) are two creations that will not cease to exist. Paradise is the final resting place of the awliyā* of Allāh, while the Hellfire is the place of punishment for His enemies. The inhabitants of Paradise will remain therein eternally: *Verily, the sinful evildoers will be in the punishment of Hell to remain in it eternally, (their torment) will not be lightened for them, and they will be plunged into destruction with deep regret and sorrow.*²⁶⁰

وَيُؤْتَى بِالْمَوْتِ فِي صَوْرَةِ كَبْشٍ أَمْلَحَ، فَيُذْبَحُ بَيْنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَالنَّارِ، ثُمَّ يُقَالُ: (يَا أَهْلَ الْجَنَّةِ خُلُودٌ وَلَا مَوْتٌ، يَا أَهْلَ النَّارِ خُلُودٌ وَلَا مَوْتٌ.)

Death will be brought in the form of a sturdy ram and slaughtered between Paradise and Hellfire. Then it will be said: *'O inhabitants of Paradise! Eternity for you and no (more) death! O inhabitants of Hell! Eternity for you and no (more) death!'*

²⁵⁹ Qurān: 21:28

²⁶⁰ Qurān: 43:74-75

We are obligated to have faith in everything that the Prophet ﷺ informed us of and in what has been authentically transmitted from him, concerning that which we ourselves witnessed [through our senses] or that which we were absent from²⁶¹. We know that it is reality and truth [especially when something is authentically transmitted]. There is no difference in these matters between that which we can understand and that which we may be ignorant of and have not come to know the reality of its meaning. An example of this is the narration concerning the Isrā' and Mi'rāj (Nightly Journey and Heavenly Ascension)²⁶², during which he was awake and not dreaming [and this is the mu'tamad of the Madhhab. He ﷺ was awake during these events and saw Allāh with his eyes]; for indeed Quraysh denied it and considered it something incredible [and unbelievable], and they did not deny dreams [for, if someone went to them with a dream in which such-and-such happened, they would not bother to refute or deny the dream. However, what the Prophet ﷺ said bothered them, because he claimed it happened to him in reality (i.e. while being awake)]. Another example is when the Angel of Death approached Mūsā, peace upon him, in order to take his soul. He [i.e. Mūsā] struck him and gouged out his eye, so he returned to his Lord who gave him his eye back²⁶³ [and it may be difficult for some to understand and believe that this has happened in reality, but it has been authentically reported from the Prophet ﷺ and one should submit to and believe in it accordingly].

²⁶¹ This chapter is concerned with al-sama'iyāt (auditory reports). It is everything that is affirmed through hearing (i.e. Divine Legislation). One's intellect has no part in these matters, and therefore one should believe in and submit to them.

²⁶² The primary source for this event is the Qurān, in which Allāh says: 'Glorified is He who took his servant for a journey by night from al-masjid al-haram to al-masjid al-Aqsa' (Qurān: 17:1). The ahādith provide further detail regarding this event. See for example, al-Bukhārī, no. 349, 7517 / al-Nasā'i, no. 450.

²⁶³ See footnote no. 182.

And from those things [that one is required to accept and have faith in] are the Signs of the Hour [i.e. the Day of Judgment], such as: the emergence of the Dajjāl²⁶⁴; the descend of 'Īsā b. Maryam, peace upon him, [and this does not contradict with the claim that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ is the last prophet, for 'Īsā will not descend as a prophet or a messenger. Instead, he will descend as a servant of Allāh with particular task to carry out (i.e. kill the Dajjāl). Furthermore, he will follow the shari'ah of Muḥammad and not his own. According to some narrations he will pray behind a Muslim imām²⁶⁵], who will then kill him²⁶⁶ [i.e. the Dajjāl]; the emergence of Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj²⁶⁷; the emergence of the Beast²⁶⁸; the rising of the sun from the West²⁶⁹, and what is similar to these things from what has been authentically reported²⁷⁰ [these examples are supported by numerous authentic narrations].

The Punishment and Pleasure [or reward] of the grave are true. The Prophet ﷺ would seek refuge from it [meaning, from the

²⁶⁴ See for example, al-Bukhārī, no. 1882: 'Allāh's Messenger ﷺ told us a long narrative about al-Dajjāl, and among the many things he mentioned, was his saying: 'al-Dajjāl will come...'

²⁶⁵ See for example, Muslim, no. 156: 'A section of my people will not cease fighting for the Truth and will prevail till the Day of Resurrection. He said: 'Īsā b. Maryam would then descend and their commander would invite him to come and lead them in prayer, but he would say: No, some amongst you are commanders over some (amongst you). This is the honour from Allāh for this Ummah.'

²⁶⁶ See for example, Abū Dawūd, nr 4321: 'Then prophet 'Īsā b. Maryam will descend at the white minaret to the east of Damascus. He will then catch him up at the gate of Ludd and kill him (i.e. al-Dajjāl).'

²⁶⁷ The primary source for this event is the Qurān, in which Allāh says: 'Until, when Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj are let, and they swiftly swarm from every mound' (Qurān: 96:97). And, what is mentioned in yūrah al-Kahf (Qurān: 18:93-99) of the story of Dhū al-Qarnayn.

Also, see Muslim, no. 2937: 'And then Allāh would send Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj and they would swarm down from every slope. The first of them would pass the lake of Tiberias and drink out of it. And when the last of them would pass, he would say: There was once water there.', and it is part of a very long ḥadīth concerning other signs of the Hour.

²⁶⁸ The primary source for this event is the Qurān, in which Allāh says: 'And when the Word is fulfilled against them (the unjust), we shall produce from the earth a beast for them, to speak to them' (Qurān: 27:82).

Also, see Muslim, no. 2901 in which ten signs of the Last Hour are mentioned, one of them being the coming of the Beast.'

²⁶⁹ Al-Bukhārī, no. 7121: 'Till the sun rises from the West. So, when the sun will rise and the people will see it...'

²⁷⁰ Like the coming of al-Mahdī. As is transmitted by Abū Dawūd, no. 4283, in his Sunan in book 38: 'If only one day of this time (world) remained, Allāh would raise up a man from my family who would fill this earth with justice as it has been filled with oppression.'

punishment and torment], and he commanded that this be done in every prayer [Ibn 'Abbās reported that he ﷺ taught his companions to say this supplication, just like he taught them *ṣūrah*s from the Qurān], instructing them to say: 'O Allah, I seek refuge with You from the torment of hell. And I seek refuge with You from the torment of the grave, and I seek refuge with You from the trial of al-Masīḥ al-Dajjāl, and I seek refuge with You from the trial of life and death.'²⁷¹ The relied upon position in the Ḥanbalī madhhab is that it is recommended to say the aforementioned supplication in every prayer, while the other opinion in the Ḥanbalī madhhab is that it is obligatory. 'Obligation' means that if it is left out intentionally, the Prayer becomes invalid immediately, and if it is left out due to forgetfulness or ignorance, one must perform the prostration of forgetfulness. The justification for this later position (i.e. including the performance of this supplication amongst the obligatory aspects (*wājibāt*)) is that it was the habit of the Prophet ﷺ to say it during the Prayer, and he did not leave its performance. Although an obligatory aspect has to be supported by clear evidence, this was included nonetheless because the Prophet ﷺ never left it out. Additionally, to say that the four things mentioned in this supplication are mere metaphors is *kufr*²⁷². **The *fitnah* (Trial) of the grave is true²⁷³. The questions of Munkar and Nakir are true²⁷⁴. The Resurrection after death is true and will occur when Isrāfīl²⁷⁵, peace upon him, blows the Trumpet²⁷⁶**

²⁷¹ Reported by Muslim, no. 590.

²⁷² A general principle is: something is only taken as a metaphor if there is evidence to indicate this, or there is evidence that the literal meaning cannot be intended.

²⁷³ A long narration detailing the trials of the grave, such as the questioning, punishment and pleasure is transmitted by al-Tirmidhī in his Sunan, no. 4753.

²⁷⁴ Al-Tirmidhī, no. 1071: 'When the deceased, or he said when one of you, is buried, two angels, black and blue come to him. One of them is called al-Munkar, and the other al-Nakir. They say: 'What did you used to say about this man?' So, he says what he was saying (before death): 'He is Allah's slave and His Messenger. I testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muḥammad is His slave and His Messenger.'

²⁷⁵ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī mentions in *Fath al-Bārī*, vol. 20, p. 295-297, various *aḥādīth* which mention Isrāfīl as the angels that is designated to blow the Trumpet. One of these *aḥādīth* is transmitted by Abū al-Shaykh al-Aṣḥabānī in *Kitāb al-'Āṣamah*, no. 389: 'Then He (Allāh) said: 'Be!' and Isrāfīl was (created)... and he was commanded to take the Trumpet, and he took it.' This and other *aḥādīth* are also mentioned by al-Bayhaqī in *al-Ba'ih wa al-Nashr* (p. 336-339).

²⁷⁶ There will be two distinct trumpet blows. The first is the 'blowing of terror' (*naḥkhāh al-*

[there is some disagreement amongst the scholars whether there are two or three bowings of the Trumpet. The relied upon position of the Ḥanbali madhhab states that it is three, and one can refer to *Lawāmi' al-Anwār* by al-Safārīnī and its *Mukhtaṣar* by al-Shaṭṭī. The first blowing is called the *nafkhaḥ al-faẓā'* (blowing of terror), and it will terrify the creation of Allāh. The second is called the *nafkhaḥ al-ṣa'qah* (blowing of the shock), and it will cause every living thing to die. The third is the *nafkhaḥ al-qiyām li-rabb al-'ālamīn* (blowing of the standing before the Lord of the worlds) and it causes the Resurrection and standing before Allāh at the dawn of the Day of Judgement. The second blowing can also be described as the *nafkhaḥ al-mawt* (blowing of death), while the third may also be called the *nafkhaḥ al-ba'th wa al-nushūr* (blowing of the Resurrection and standing) as the first blowing will cause all people to die. With regards to the second blowing of the Trumpet, Allāh, the Exalted, says: *'And behold from the graves they will come out quickly to their Lord.'*²⁷⁷

Mankind will be gathered on the Day of Judgement, barefoot, naked, uncircumcised, and having nothing with them. They will stop at the final place of standing, until our Prophet ﷺ intercedes for them [and this is *al-shafā'ah al-'uẓmā* (the Great Intercession)]²⁷⁸ and Allāh, blessed and exalted is He, calls them all to give account for their deeds; then the Scales will be erected, the records will be distributed and the books of the deeds will be dispersed into the right and left hands [and all of these things are from the *ghābiyāt*

faza') which will alarm and frighten mankind, after which they will fall dead. The second is the 'blowing of resurrection' (*nafkhaḥ al-ba'th*), which will resurrect mankind and causes them to rise from their graves. As is mentioned in *sūrah al-Zumar*: *'And the Trumpet will be blown, and all who are in the heavens and all who are on earth will swoon away, except whom Allāh wills to remain. Then it will be blown a second time and behold, they will be standing, looking on'* (Qurān: 39:68).

²⁷⁷ Qurān: 36:51

²⁷⁸ Linguistically 'intercession' means 'to make an odd number (*al-witr*) even (*shaf'an*)'. Technically it means 'to act on someone's behalf to gain some benefit or to prevent some harm'.

The Intercession (*al-shafā'ah*) on the Day of Judgement is divided into two types: 1) the specific (*al-khās*) intercession, meaning that which is specific only to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, and 2) the general (*al-'amm*) intercession, meaning that which is general for the Prophet ﷺ as well as for others.

(unseen); they are all real and true]: *Then as for him who will be given his record in his right hand, he surely will receive an easy reckoning. And will return back to his family in joy! But whoever is given his record behind his back (or in his right hand), he will invoke (for his) destruction. And he shall enter the Blazing Fire and (he shall be) made to taste its burning flames.*²⁷⁹

The mizān (Balance) has two scales and a tongue, by which the deeds are weighted [and it is real, existing with certain characteristics]: *Then those whose Balance (of good deeds) are heavy, they are the successful. And those whose Balance (of good deeds) are light, they are those who lose their own selves, in Hell will they abide (forever).*²⁸⁰

For our Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ is the ḥawḍ (Basin)²⁸¹ on the Day of Resurrection; its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. Its drinking vessels are as numerous as the stars in the sky. Whoever drinks of it, will never again experience thirst²⁸². [The ru'yah, shafā'ah and ḥawḍ, are established in mutawātir narration of the highest degree and are real and not metaphoric.].

The ṣirāṭ (Bridge) is true. The righteous people will cross it [in various ways; some will crawl or walk over it, whilst other will pass over it quickly] and the evil ones will fall from it²⁸³ [therefore crossing the ṣirāṭ depends on one's deeds].

Our Prophet ﷺ will intercede for whoever enters the Fire from the people of his Ummah who have committed major sins. They will come out of it due to his shafā'ah (Intercession), but only after having been burned until they became ashes and charcoal. They will then enter Paradise due to his intercession. Intercession will also be done by the rest of the Prophets, believers and Angels²⁸⁴ [thus, the shafā'ah is not limited to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ only, although his intercession is the greatest and reserved for him alone²⁸⁵].

²⁷⁹ Qurān: 84:7-12

²⁸⁰ Qurān: 23:102-103

²⁸¹ Al-ḥawḍ, is also often translated as 'the Fountain

²⁸² Al-Bukhārī, no. 6579 / Muslim, no. 2292.

²⁸³ Al-Bukhārī, no. 7439 / Muslim, no. 183.

²⁸⁴ See footnote no. 231

²⁸⁵ The following are the various types of shafā'ah (intercession) that are affirmed for Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ:

Other groups amongst the creation may intercede after they have been given permission from Allāh to do so, such as the intercession of the martyr²⁸⁶. Allāh Exalted is He, says: *'And they cannot intercede except for him with whom He is pleased. And they stand in awe for fear of Him.'*²⁸⁷ The intercession of the intercessors will be of no avail to the disbelievers [thus, the disbelievers will not benefit from intercession, except that intercession can be made for them to lighten their punishment and torment in Hell. For example, the intercession of the Prophet ﷺ for his uncle Abū Ṭālib, which will be for the lightning of his punishment. Regarding this type of intercession one can argue whether it is an actual intercession or not, as one might say it is Allāh's mercy instead. However, the majority have understood it as a type of intercession].

Jannah and Nār (Paradise and Hellfire) are two creations that will not cease to exist [and both are already existent, for the Prophet ﷺ saw them in reality. The 'aqidah of the Ḥanābilāh is that the Hellfire, just as Paradise, will remain forever, and will not cease to exist at some point. Someone who insists on the idea of Paradise or Hellfire ceasing to exist at some point, becomes an innovator on account of his statement. However, labelling such a person as a disbeliever would be a step too

1. The great intercession (al-shafā'ah al-'uẓmā) which is specifically for the Prophet ﷺ, and this is his intercession for the coming of Allāh in order for the Judgement to begin.
2. His intercession for people whose good and bad deeds are equal, he will intercede for them to enter Paradise.
3. His intercession for another group of people for whom the Fire had been ordered, so he will intercede that they do not enter it.
4. His intercession for the raising of the ranks of those who have entered Paradise, that their rank be raised to one greater than what the reward for their actions would have given them.
5. His intercession for a people to be entered into Paradise without reckoning.
6. His intercession for the lightening of the punishment for those who deserve it, such as his intercession for his uncle Abū Ṭālib that his punishment be lightened.
7. His intercession for permission to be granted for all the Believers to enter Paradise.
8. His intercession for the people who committed major sins, amongst those who entered the Fire, that they may be brought out of it. This type is al-'ām (generally for the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, the angels, the other prophets, and the believers).

²⁸⁶ Al-Tirmidhī (no. 1663): *There are six things with Allāh for the martyr. He is forgiven with the first flow of blood (he suffers), he is shown his place in Paradise, he is protected from punishment in the grave, secured from the greatest terror, the crown of dignity is placed upon his head -and its gems are better than the world and what is in it, he is married to seventy two wives from the Hūr al-'Ayn, and he may intercede for seventy of his close relatives.'*

²⁸⁷ Qurān: 21:28

far, as he still believes in paradise and the hellfire. If he is shown the evidences which do not agree with his view, and he still insists, then he has abandoned the clear āyāt from the Qurān, which state that Paradise and Hellfire will remain forever, in favour of ambiguous text and erroneous arguments, and he becomes an innovator on this account. The Prophet ﷺ will be the first to open the gates of Paradise, and the first one who will enter it. Therefore, the rest of the people will only enter after he ﷺ does. People who die will remain in their graves until the Day of Resurrection, and will not physically enter Paradise or Hell before that day, although they will be shown their final abodes while being in their graves.]. **Paradise is the final resting place of the awliyā²⁸⁸ of Allah, while the Hellfire is the place of punishment for His enemies. The inhabitants of Paradise will remain therein eternally: Verily, the sinful evildoers will be in the punishment of Hell to remain in it eternally, (their torment) will not be lightened for them, and they will be plunged into destruction with deep regrets and sorrows.**²⁸⁹ [and the author did not say 'the inhabitants of the Hellfire', as he did with regards to Paradise; yet, he said 'the sinful evildoers', meaning the believers who have sinned will eventually be taken out of the Hellfire and their duration in it will vary.

Death will be brought in the form of a sturdy ram and slaughtered between Paradise and Hellfire. Then it will be said: *O inhabitants of Paradise! Eternity for you and no (more) death! O inhabitants of Hell! Eternity for you and no (more) death!*²⁹⁰ [so, death will be brought forward in a materialistic form and will be slaughtered; which means there will be no more death after this event and everyone will remain eternally in their final abode. This slaughtering will take place only after all the believers have been removed from the Hellfire and have entered Paradise].

²⁸⁸ Awliyā' is often translated as 'close friend' although it is not an accurate translation. It might be that the term 'ally' is more appropriate, however, a 'one word' translation in this case will not suffice and does injustice to the Arabic word.

²⁸⁹ Qurān: 43:74-75

²⁹⁰ Al-Bukhārī, no. 4730 / Muslim, no. 2849

THE PROPHET ﷺ AND HIS COMPANIONS

وَمُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ خَاتَمُ النَّبِيِّينَ وَسَيِّدُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ، لَا يَصِحُّ إِيمَانُ عَبْدٍ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنَ بِرِسَالَتِهِ، وَيَشْهَدَ بِنَبُوَّتِهِ، وَلَا يَقْضَى تَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِي يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ إِلَّا بِشَفَاعَتِهِ، وَلَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ أُمَّةٌ إِلَّا بَعْدَ دُخُولِ أُمِّيهِ. صَاحِبُ لِيَاوِي الْحَمْدِ، وَالْمَقَامِ الْمَحْمُودِ، وَالْخَوْضِ الْمَوْرُودِ، وَهُوَ إِمَامُ النَّبِيِّينَ، وَخَطِيبُهُمْ، وَصَاحِبُ شَفَاعَتِهِمْ، أُمُّهُ خَيْرُ الْأُمَّةِ وَأَصْحَابُهُ خَيْرُ أَصْحَابِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ.

Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, the Seal of the Prophets and the leader of those sent by Allāh. The imān of a servant is not valid until he believes in his message and bears witness to his Prophethood. Mankind will not be judged on the Day of Resurrection except with his intercession. No nation will enter Paradise until his nation has entered it. He is the possessor of the Banner of Praise (al-lawā'ī al-ḥamd), the most Praiseworthy Station (al-maqām al-mahmūd) and the ḥawḍ. He is the leader of the Prophets, their spokesman and the one who possesses their intercession. His Ummah is the best of nations and his companions are the best of those who accompanied Prophets.

وَأَفْضَلُ أُمَّيِهِ أَبُو بَكْرٍ الصِّدِّيقُ، ثُمَّ عُمَرُ الْفَارُوقُ، ثُمَّ عُثْمَانُ ذُو الْثَوْرَيْنِ، ثُمَّ عَلِيٌّ الْمُرْتَضَى رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ. لِمَا رَوَى عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: (كُنَّا نَقُولُ وَالنَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَيٌّ: أَبُو بَكْرٍ، ثُمَّ عُمَرُ، ثُمَّ عُثْمَانُ. فَيَنْتَلِعُ ذَلِكَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَلَا يُنْكِرُهُ). وَصَحِّحَ الرَّوَاةُ عَنْ عَلِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: (خَيْرُ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ بَعْدَ نَبِيِّهَا أَبُو بَكْرٍ ثُمَّ عُمَرُ، وَلَوْ شِئْتُ سَمِعْتُ الثَّالِثَ). وَرَوَى أَبُو الدَّرْدَاءِ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: ((مَا طَلَعَتِ الشَّمْسُ وَلَا غَرَبَتْ بَعْدَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ عَلَى أَفْضَلٍ مِنْ أَبِي بَكْرٍ)). وَهُوَ أَحَقُّ خَلْقِ اللَّهِ بِالْجَلَالَةِ بَعْدَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى

اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ؛ لِفَضْلِهِ وَسَابِقِيهِ، وَتَقْدِيمِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَهُ فِي الصَّلَاةِ عَلَى جَمِيعِ الصَّحَابَةِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ، وَإِجْمَاعِ الصَّحَابَةِ عَلَى تَقْدِيمِهِ وَمُبَاتَعَتِهِ، وَلَمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيَجْمَعَهُمْ عَلَى ضَلَالَةٍ. ثُمَّ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ عُمَرُ؛ لِفَضْلِهِ وَعَهْدِ أَبِي بَكْرٍ إِلَيْهِ. ثُمَّ عُثْمَانُ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ؛ لِتَقْدِيمِ أَهْلِ الشُّوْرَى لَهُ. ثُمَّ عَلِيٌّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ؛ لِفَضْلِهِ وَإِجْمَاعِ أَهْلِ عَصْرِهِ عَلَيْهِ. وَهَؤُلَاءِ الْخُلَفَاءُ الرَّاشِدُونَ الْمَهْدِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِيهِمْ: «(عَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِي وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ الْمَهْدِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِي، عَضُوا عَلَيْهَا بِالنَّوَاجِدِ)». وَقَالَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «(الْخِلَافَةُ مِنْ بَعْدِي ثَلَاثُونَ سَنَةً)» فَكَانَ آخِرُهَا خِلَافَةُ عَلِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

The best of his Ummah was Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (the truthful one), then 'Umar al-Farūq (the distinguisher), then 'Uthmān Dhū al-Nūrayn (Possessor of the two lights) and then 'Alī al-Murtaḍā (the one who attained Allāh's pleasure), may Allāh be pleased with all of them. This is based upon what has been reported by 'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar, Allāh be pleased with him, that he said: *'We used to say, while the Prophet ﷺ was alive; Abū Bakr, then 'Umar, then 'Uthmān. This would reach the Prophet ﷺ and he would not deny it.'* It is reported on the authority of 'Alī, Allāh be pleased with him, that he said: *'The best of this Ummah after its Prophet is Abū Bakr, then 'Umar. And if I wanted to, I would have named a third.'* Abū al-Dardā reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: *'The sun does not rise nor does it set upon anyone better, after the Prophets and the Messengers, than Abū Bakr.'* He had the most right to the caliphate from all of the creation of Allāh, after the Prophet ﷺ; and this is due to his merits and his precedence, and also due to the Prophet ﷺ preferring him over all of his companions, may Allāh be pleased with them, to lead the prayer. It is also due to the ijma' of the companions in recognising his superiority and giving the pledge of allegiance to him. And Allāh would not have united them upon misguidance. Then after him was 'Umar, due to his merits and Abū Bakr's delegation of it to him. Then 'Uthmān, Allāh be

pleased with him, due to him being chosen by the members of the *shūrā* (council). Then 'Alī, Allāh be pleased with him, due to his merits and the *ijmā'* of the people of his time. These are the rightly guided caliphs about whom the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: *'Stick to my Sunnah and the sunnah of the rightly-guided caliphs after me. Bite onto it with your molar teeth.'* The Prophet ﷺ said: *'The caliphate after me will endure for thirty years.'* The last part of it occurred with the caliphate of 'Alī, Allāh be pleased with him.

وَتَشْهَدُ لِلْعَشْرَةِ بِالْجَنَّةِ، كَمَا شَهِدَ لَهُمُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ: «أَبُو بَكْرٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَعُمَرُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَعُثْمَانُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَعَلِيٌّ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَطَلْحَةُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَالزُّبَيْرُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَسَعْدٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَسَعِيدُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَعَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ عَوْفٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَأَبُو عُبَيْدَةَ بْنُ الْجَرَّاحِ فِي الْجَنَّةِ». وَكُلُّ مَنْ شَهِدَ لَهُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِالْجَنَّةِ شَهِدْنَا لَهُ بِهَا، كَقَوْلِهِ: «الْحَسَنُ وَالْحُسَيْنُ سَيِّدَا شَبَابِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ»، وَقَوْلِهِ لِثَابِتِ بْنِ قَيْسٍ: «إِنَّهُ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ».

We testify for the ten who will be in Paradise, just as the Prophet ﷺ testified for them, when he said: *'Abū Bakr is in Paradise, 'Umar is in Paradise, 'Uthmān is in Paradise, 'Alī is in Paradise, Ṭalḥa is in Paradise, al-Zubayr is in Paradise, Sa'd is in Paradise, Sa'id is in Paradise, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf is in Paradise, Abū 'Ubaydah b. al-Jarrāḥ is in Paradise.'* As for everyone else whom the Prophet ﷺ has testified will be in Paradise, then we bear witness to that. Such as his statement: *'Al-Ḥasan and al-Husayn are the leaders of the youth in Paradise.'* And his statement to Thābit b. Qays: *'Indeed, he is from the inhabitants of paradise.'*

وَلَا نَحْزِمُ لِأَحَدٍ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقَبِيلَةِ بِجَنَّةٍ وَلَا نَارٍ إِلَّا مَنْ جَزَمَ لَهُ الرَّسُولُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، لِكَيْ لَا تَرْجُو لِلْمُحْسِنِ وَتَخَافَ عَلَى الْمُسِيءِ. وَلَا تُكْفَرُ أَحَدًا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقَبِيلَةِ بِذَنْبٍ، وَلَا نُخْرِجُهُ عَنِ الْإِسْلَامِ بِعَمَلٍ.

We do not confirm for anyone from the People of the Qiblah that he will be in Paradise or Hellfire, except for the one whom the Messenger has confirmed it for. However, we hope for the one who does good, and we fear for the one who does evil. We do not declare anyone from the people of the Qiblah a disbeliever because of a sin, nor do we expel him out of Islām because of an action or deed.

وَرَى الْحَجَّ وَالْجِهَادَ مَاضِيًا مَعَ طَاعَةِ كُلِّ إِمَامٍ بَرًّا كَانَ أَوْ فَاجِرًا، وَصَلَاةَ الْجُمُعَةِ خَلْفَهُمْ جَائِزَةً. قَالَ أَنَسٌ: قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «ثَلَاثٌ مِنْ أَصْلِ الْإِيمَانِ: الْكَفُّ عَنْهُنَّ قَالَ: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ. وَلَا تُكْفَرُهُ بِذَنْبٍ، وَلَا تُخْرِجُهُ مِنَ الْإِسْلَامِ بِعَمَلٍ. وَالْجِهَادُ مَاضِيٌ مُنْذُ بَعَثَنِي اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ حَتَّى يُقَاتِلَ آخِرُ أُمَّيِّ الدُّجَالِ، لَا يَبْتَغِلُهُ جَوْرٌ جَائِرٌ وَلَا عَدْلٌ عَادِلٌ، وَالْإِيمَانُ بِالْأَقْدَارِ». رَوَاهُ أَبُو دَاوُدَ.

We hold that Hajj and Jihād are continuous along with the obedience to every Muslim leader, whether he is righteous or wicked. And the congregational prayer behind them is permissible. Anas reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: *Three thing are from the foundation of imān; refraining from (harming) anyone who says 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah'. We do not declare him a disbeliever due to a sin (which he has committed), nor do we expel him out of Islām due to an action (he has done). Jihād is everlasting from the time Allah sent me to the time when the last part of my Ummaḥ will fight the Dajjal. It will not be invalidated by the oppression of the oppressor, or the justice of the just. And (the third is) the belief in al-qadar.* Narrated by Abū Dawūd.

وَمِنْ الشَّيْءِ تَوَلَّى أَصْحَابَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَمَحَبَّتُهُمْ، وَذِكْرُ مُحَابِيهِهِمْ، وَالرَّحْمَةُ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَالِاسْتِغْفَارُ لَهُمْ، وَالْكَفُّ عَنْ ذِكْرِ مَسَاوِيهِهِمْ، وَمَا شَحَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ، وَاعْتِقَادُ فَضْلِهِمْ، وَمَعْرِفَةُ سَابِقَتِهِمْ. قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا﴾، وَقَالَ تَعَالَى:

﴿مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ﴾. وَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «لَا تَسُبُّوا أَصْحَابِي، فَإِنْ أَحَدَكُمْ لَوْ أَنْفَقَ مِثْلَ أُخْدُ ذَهَبًا مَا بَلَغَ مَدُّ أَحَدِهِمْ وَلَا نَصِيقَهُ».

From the Sunnah is; loyalty to the companions, to love them, mention their good qualities, and to ask Allāh to grant them mercy and to forgive them. And (also) refraining from mentioning their shortcomings and what they differed in, believing in their virtues and acknowledging their superiority. Allāh, the Exalted, says: *'And those who come after them say: 'our Lord! Forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in Faith. And put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed.'*²⁹¹ And He, the Exalted, says: *'Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh. And those who are with him are severe against the disbelievers, while being merciful among themselves'*²⁹² The Prophet ﷺ said: *'Do not revile my companions, for indeed if one you were to give in charity, the equivalent of the mount of Uhud in gold, it would not reach a mudd of one of them, not even half (of what they gave).'*

وَمِنَ الشُّعْبِ الرَّضَى عَنْ أَزْوَاجِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، أَشْهَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، الْمُطَهَّرَاتِ، الْمُبَرَّاتِ مِنْ كُلِّ سَوْءٍ، أَفْضَلُهُنَّ خَدِيجَةُ بِنْتُ خُوَيْلِدٍ وَعَائِشَةُ الصَّدِيقَةُ بِنْتُ الصَّدِيقِ الَّتِي بَرَأَهَا اللَّهُ فِي كِتَابِهِ، زَوْجُ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ، فَمَنْ قَذَفَهَا بِمَا بَرَأَهَا اللَّهُ مِنْهُ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ.

From the Sunnah is; being pleased with the wives of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, the Mothers of the Believers, the pure ones free of every type of evil. The best of them were Khadijah b. Khuwaylid and 'Ā'ishah b. al-Siddiq, whom Allāh declared free in His Book (from the false accusations against her). She is the wife of the Prophet ﷺ in this world and the next. Whosoever falsely accuses her with that which Allāh declared her free of, has disbelieved in Allāh, the Most Great.

²⁹¹ Qurān: 59:10

²⁹² Qurān: 48:29

وَمُعَاوِيَةُ خَالَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، وَكَاتِبُ وَحْيِ اللَّهِ، وَأَخَذَ خُلَفَاءُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ رَحِيحَ اللَّهِ عَنْهُمْ

Mu'āwiyah is the uncle of the Believers, and one of those who wrote the Revelation of Allāh. He was one of the caliphs of the Muslims, Allāh be pleased with them.

Commentary: The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions

Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, the Seal of the Prophets and the leader of those sent by Allāh [additionally he is also the best of creation, and in that regard, he is better than the Throne ('arsh). His burial place is the best place on earth, even better than the Ka'bah, although Mecca in general is better than Medina, likewise the Sacred Mosque (i.e. Masjid al-Ḥarām) is considered better than the mosque of the Prophet ﷺ. And this is according to the mu'tamad position of the Madhhab]. **The imān of a servant is not valid until he believes in his message and bears witness to his Prophethood. Mankind will not be judged on the Day of Judgement except with his intercession. And no nation will enter Paradise, until his nation has entered it. He is the possessor of the Banner of Praise (al-lawā'i al-ḥamd), the Praiseworthy Station (al-maqām al-maḥmūd) and the ḥawḍ. He is the leader of the Prophets, their spokesman and the one who possesses their intercession. His Ummah is the best of nations and his companions are the best of those who accompanied Prophets.**

The best of his Ummah was Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq (the truthful one), then 'Umar al-Farūq (the distinguisher), then 'Uthmān Dhū al-Nūrayn (Possessor of the two lights) and then 'Alī al-Murtaḍā (the one who attained Allāh's pleasure), may Allāh be pleased with all of them. This is based upon what has been reported by 'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar, that he said: *We used to say, while the Prophet ﷺ was alive; Abū Bakr, then 'Umar, then 'Uthmān. This would reach the Prophet ﷺ and he would not deny it.*²⁹³ It is reported on the authority

²⁹³ Al-Bukhārī, no. 3655 / Abū Dawūd, no. 4628 / al-Tirmidhī, no. 3707, and these narrations all stop after mentioning 'Uthmān. Imām Aḥmad does transmit a report in *al-Musnad*.

of 'Ali, that he said: *The best of this Ummah after its Prophet is Abū Bakr, then 'Umar. And if I wanted to, I would have named a third.*²⁹⁴ Abū al-Dardā' reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: *The sun does not rise nor does it set upon anyone better, after the Prophets and the Messengers, than Abū Bakr.*²⁹⁵ He had the most right to the caliphate from all of the creation of Allāh, after the Prophet ﷺ; and this is due to his merits and his precedence, and also due to the Prophet ﷺ preferring him over all of his companions, may Allāh be pleased with them, to lead the prayer. It is also due to the *ijmā'* of the companions in recognising his superiority and giving the pledge of allegiance to him. And Allāh would not have united them upon misguidance [and this is mentioned in the books of uṣūl al-fiqh; that the *ijmā'* has strength, because, the Prophet ﷺ mentioned that this Ummah can never gather upon something that is incorrect, and this narration is almost mutawātir²⁹⁶]. Then after him was 'Umar, due to his merits and Abū Bakr's delegation of it [meaning, the caliphate] to him [before he died]. Then 'Uthmān, Allāh be pleased with him, due to him being chosen by the members of the *shūrā* (council). Then, 'Ali, Allāh be pleased with him, due to his merits and the *ijmā'* of the people of his time on it [meaning, he was the most deserving of the caliphate from amongst his peers, according to them]. These are the rightly guided caliphs about whom the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: *Stick to my Sunnah and the sunnah of the rightly-guided caliphs after me. Bite onto it* [i.e. His ﷺ Sunnah and those of the rightly-guided caliphs] *with your molar teeth.*²⁹⁷ [And this means one should follow it very strictly, and not diverge from it]. The Prophet ﷺ said: *The caliphate after me will endure for thirty years.*²⁹⁸ The last part of it

no. 4797, that mentions 'Ali as the third in line, based on certain qualities. However, this appears to be a weak report. Perhaps, Ibn Qudāmah combined between these reports. Whatever the case may be, the names and order mentioned by Ibn Qudāmah are generally accepted as being correct.

²⁹⁴ Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad*, no. 1060 / *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah*, no. 397.

²⁹⁵ Imām Aḥmad in *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah*, no. 135.

²⁹⁶ Al-Tirmidhī, no. 2167.

²⁹⁷ Imām Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 17145 / Abū Dawūd, no. 4607 / al-Tirmidhī, no. 2676.

²⁹⁸ Abū Dawūd, no. 4646 / al-Tirmidhī, no. 2226.

occurred with the caliphate of 'Ali, Allāh be pleased with him [yet, from the last six months of this specific time period was the rule of al-Ḥasan b. 'Ali, before he handed it over to Mu'āwiyah b. Abi Sufyān who's rule fell outside of the time mentioned in the aforementioned prophetic narration. Therefore, al-Ḥasan b. 'Ali may also be considered from the rightly-guided caliphs²⁹⁹].

We testify for the ten who will be in Paradise, just as the Prophet ﷺ testified for them, when he said: *Abū Bakr is in Paradise, Umar is in Paradise, Uthmān is in Paradise, 'Ali is in Paradise, Ṭalḥa is in Paradise, al-Zubayr is in Paradise, Sa'd is in Paradise, Sa'īd is in Paradise, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf is in Paradise, Abū Ubaydah b. al-Jarrah is in Paradise.*³⁰⁰ As for everyone else whom the Prophet ﷺ has testified will be in Paradise, then we bear witness to that. Such as his statement: *'Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are the leaders of the youth in Paradise.*³⁰¹ And his statement to Thābit b. Qays: *Indeed, he is from the inhabitants of Paradise.*³⁰²

We do not confirm [with certainty] for anyone from the People of the Qiblah that he will be in Paradise or the Hellfire, except for the one whom the Messenger has confirmed it for. However, we hope for the one who does good [that he shall enter Paradise], and we fear for the one who does evil [that he will enter Hellfire]. So, whether Muslim or a disbeliever, their final abode (i.e. Paradise or Hellfire) is not determined at all by people. Maybe a person was in fact the opposite of what people said, for only Allāh knows the true reality of a person. However, in general it can be said that the disbeliever will go to the hellfire, and the Muslim will enter paradise]. **We do not declare anyone from the People of the Qiblah a disbeliever because of a sin** [he has committed, like leaving the Prayer for example, until he is tried

²⁹⁹ The Prophet ﷺ died in 11H, which means that the period of the caliphate he mentioned would endure until 41H. Al-Ḥasan b. 'Ali took over the caliphate after his father 'Ali died (40H). He subsequently held this position for seven months, after which he surrendered his reign to Mu'āwiyah in the year 41H. This shows that his reign was within the period of the rightly-guided caliphs, as described by the prophet ﷺ.

³⁰⁰ Imām Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 1675 / *al-Tirmidhī*, no. 3747.

³⁰¹ Imām Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 10999 / *al-Tirmidhī*, no. 3768.

³⁰² Imām Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 12399 / *al-Bukhārī*, no. 3613 / *Muslim*, no. 119.

and tested], **nor do we expel him out of Islām because of an action or deed** [that he has done, until it is confirmed what he meant by it. The trying and judging of a person is performed by the ruler, his deputies and the scholars, and further details regarding this can be found in the books of fiqh.

We hold that Ḥajj and Jihād are continuous along with the obedience to every Muslim leader, whether he is righteous or wicked [as long as he applies the shari'ah]. **And the congregational prayer behind them is permissible** [unless they are open sinners, which will make the congregational prayer impermissible behind them according to the relied upon opinion in the Ḥanbali madhhab]. **Anas reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: *Three thing are from the foundation of imān; refraining from (harming) anyone who say 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh'. We do not declare him a disbeliever due to a sin (which he has committed), nor do we expel him out of Islām due to an action (he has done). The Jihād is everlasting from the time that Allāh sent me to the time when the last part of my Ummah will fight the Dajjal. It will not be invalidated by the oppression of the oppressor, or the justice of the just*** [although, the kufr of the disbeliever will invalidate it]. **And (the third is) the belief in the qadar.**' Narrated by Abū Dawūd³⁰³ [however this narration is not authentic].

From the Sunnah is; loyalty to the companions, to love them, mention their good qualities [and to show kindness and respect to them], **and to ask Allāh to grant them mercy and to forgive them.** **And (also) to refrain from mentioning their shortcomings and what they differed in** [for example, what happened during the first fitnah between Mu'awiyah and 'Ali], **believing in their virtues and acknowledging their superiority** [and acknowledging that they preceded us in Islām; meaning, they are better than the rest]. **Allāh, the Exalted, says: *'And those who come after them say; 'our Lord! Forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in Faith. And put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed.'***³⁰⁴ **And He, the Exalted,**

³⁰³ Abū Dawūd, no. 2532.

³⁰⁴ Qurān: 59:10

says: *Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh. And those who are with him are severe against the disbelievers, while being merciful among themselves*³⁰⁵ The Prophet ﷺ said: *Do not revile my companions, for indeed if one you were to give in charity, the equivalent of the mount of Uḥud in gold, it would not reach a mudd* [a type of measurement commonly used in the time of the Prophet ﷺ] *of one of them, not even half (of what they give).*³⁰⁶

From the Sunnah is; being pleased with the wives of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, the Mothers of the Believers, the pure ones free from every type of evil. The best of them were Khadijah b. Khuwaylid and 'A'ishah b. al-Ṣiddiq, whom Allāh declared free in His Book (from the false accusations against her) [and this is regarding the story of the necklace and the slander (al-ifk)³⁰⁷]. She is the wife of the Prophet ﷺ in this world and the next. Whosoever falsely accuses her with that which Allāh declared her free of, has disbelieved in Allāh, the Most Great [because he has disbelieved in the Qurān. A general principle in the Madhhab states that such a person becomes a disbeliever, if the accusing is the result of ijtihād. However, if it is the result of taqlīd, then such a person becomes an open sinner, yet, he is not to be regarded as a disbeliever. Therefore, one should not generalize and label all the Shī'ah as disbelievers, because of what they say and do although, one should hate those things. To conclude, one should be careful regarding making takfir of other Muslims.

Mu'āwiyah is the [maternal] uncle of the Believers [as he is the brother of Umm Ḥabibah, who was one of the Prophet's wives], **and one of those who wrote the Revelation of Allāh. He was one of the caliphs of the Muslims** [who came straight after the period of the rightly-guided caliphs], **Allāh be pleased with him.**

³⁰⁵ Qurān: 48:29

³⁰⁶ Imām Ahmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 11079 / al-Bukhārī, no. 3673 and Muslim, no. 2541

³⁰⁷ al-Bukhārī, no. 4141; in a very long ḥadīth narrated by 'A'ishah.

OBEYING THE MUSLIM LEADER

وَمِنَ الشُّعْبَةِ السَّمْعُ وَالطَّاعَةُ لِأَيُّمَةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَأَمْرَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِرَّعْمَ وَقَاجِرِهِمْ، مَا لَمْ يَأْمُرُوا بِمَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّهُ لَا طَاعَةَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ فِي مَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ.

From the Sunnah is; hearing and obeying the Muslim leaders and the leaders of the believers, the righteous from amongst them as well as the unrighteous ones as long as they do not order disobedience to Allāh. Verily, there is no obedience to anyone if it involves disobedience to Allāh.

وَمَنْ وَلِيَ الْخِلَافَةَ، وَاجْتَمَعَ عَلَيْهِ النَّاسُ وَرَضُوا بِهِ، أَوْ غَلَبَهُمْ بِسَيْفِهِ حَتَّى صَارَ خَلِيفَةً، وَسُمِّيَ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، وَجَبَتْ طَاعَتُهُ، وَحُرِّمَتْ مُخَالَفَتُهُ وَالْخُرُوجُ عَلَيْهِ وَمَقُوعُ عَصَا الْمُسْلِمِينَ.

It is obligatory to obey whosoever is given the caliphate while the people are united in his selection and are pleased with him, or whoever became the caliph by overpowering the people with his sword and is called Leader of the Believers. Opposing him, revolting against him and sowing the seeds of dissension among the Muslim against him is forbidden.

Commentary: Obeying the Muslim leader

From the Sunnah is; hearing and obeying the Muslim leaders and the rulers of the believers, the righteous from among them as well as the unrighteous ones as long as they do not order the disobedience to Allāh [so, when he rules with something other than the shari'ah he orders disobedience. In this case he is not to be followed or obeyed]. **Verily, there is no obedience to anyone if it involves disobedience to Allāh** [and this ruler should be disobeyed and

can even be fought in some cases, but this is related to the *maṣlaḥah* (public interest and benefit). For example, if fighting the ruler leads to widespread bloodshed or worsens the affairs of the Muslims, then it should be avoided and not fighting him will be considered the lesser of the two evils. It is important to emphasize that the scholars should be consulted for a ruling regarding fighting the ruler or not.].

It is obligatory to obey whosoever is given the caliphate while the people are united in his selection and are pleased with him, or whoever became the caliph by overcoming the people with his sword [the act of 'overpowering people with the sword' by using armed force might be prohibited, however, it being prohibited is irrelevant to the issue of keeping Muslims safe, and stopping any bloodshed by obeying this person as long as he keeps the religion safe] **and is called Leader of the Believers** [it is not necessary that the people and/or scholars proclaim him leader of the believers. He himself can proclaim to be leader of the believers as he has the position and army to support his claim. If there is a case where two parties proclaim themselves to be the rightful caliph, then the one who proclaimed it first is to be followed¹⁰⁸]. **Opposing him, revolting against him and sowing the seeds of dissension among the Muslim against him** [thereby, breaking their unity], **is forbidden.**

¹⁰⁸ In his regard Muslim transmitted in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, no. 1853: 'When oath of allegiance has been taken for two caliphs, kill the one for whom the oath was taken later.'

ABANDONING THE PEOPLE OF INNOVATION

وَمِنَ الشُّعْهِ هِجْرَانُ أَهْلِ الْبِدْعِ وَمُبَازَنَتُهُمْ، وَتَرْكُ الْجِدَالِ وَالْحُصُومَاتِ فِي الدِّينِ، وَتَرْكُ النَّظَرِ فِي كُتُبِ الْمُبْتَدِعَةِ وَالْإِصْغَاءِ إِلَى كَلَامِهِمْ، وَكُلُّ مُحَدَّثَةٍ فِي الدِّينِ بِدْعَةٌ.

And from the Sunnah is; abandoning of the People of Innovations (Ahl al-Bid'ah) and distinguishing oneself from them, leaving arguing and disputing in the religion, and not looking into the books of the innovators or listening attentively to their speech. And every newly invented matter in the religion is an innovation.

وَكُلُّ مُتَسِمٍ بِغَيْرِ الْإِسْلَامِ وَالشُّعْهِ مُبْتَدِعٌ: كَالرَّافِضِيَّةِ، وَالْجَهْمِيَّةِ، وَالْخَوَارِجِ، وَالْقَدَرِيَّةِ، وَالْمُرْجِيَّةِ، وَالْمُعْتَزِّلَةِ، وَالْكَرَامِيَّةِ، وَالْكَلَابِيَّةِ، وَنَظَائِرِهِمْ، فَهَذِهِ فِرَقُ الضَّلَالِ وَطَوَائِفُ الْبِدْعِ أَعَادَتَا اللَّهُ بِهَا.

Anyone who names himself with other than Islām and the Sunnah is an innovator, such as the Rāfiḍah, the Jahmiyyah, the Khawārij, the Qadariyyah, the Murji'ah, the Mu'tazilah, the Karrāmiyyah, the Kullābiyyah and those similar to them. These are sects of misguidance and parties of innovation. May Allāh grant us refuge from them.

Commentary: Abandoning the People of Innovation

And from the Sunnah is; abandoning of the People of Innovations (Ahl al-Bid'ah) and distinguishing oneself from them [it is an obligation to abandon innovators, in order for their hearts to be reminded of their corrupted ways and to compel them to cease their innovation. Additionally, when it is known that a certain individual or group should be abandoned or boycotted, then this act of abandonment helps to make others aware of their erroneous and abhorrent positions. The evidence for the abandonment of the innovator is what has been

narrated by Ibn 'Umar from the Prophet ﷺ, that he said: *The Qadariyyah are the Magians of this community. If they are ill, do not visit them, and if they die, do not attend their funerals.*³⁰⁹

Furthermore, individuals are either scholars or layman. Concerning the scholar, if he befriends an innovator, agrees with his innovations and believes their kufr, then this scholar will be accused with regards to his aqīdah. With regards to the layman, if he befriends the innovators and gets along with them, then the innovators own position will strengthen due to the layman's ignorance. With all this in mind, it becomes clear that it is an obligation to reject innovators and their innovations by abandonment of them and their innovations which may actually be, or lead to kufr in certain cases], **leaving arguing and disputing in religion, and not looking into the books of the innovators and listening attentively to their speech** [and this is in general for all Muslims, although the scholars are subject to different rulings as at times they need to argue and dispute with innovators and look into their books in order to refute them so as to protect the religion]. **And every newly invented matter in the Religion [itself] is an innovation**³¹⁰ [it concerns innovations into the religion itself, not innovations related to the religion because all of one's life is related to the religion. So, to classify everything that is newly invented as an innovation would be highly problematic for one's life. For example, when one has a job and works to earn money to buy books in order to study the Religion, then in that case his job is related to the religion. When something is newly invented in this job, it is not classified as an innovation. However, when it is something newly invented in the religion itself such an extra type of prayer or fast and the like, then it is classified as an innovation].

Anyone who names himself with other than Islām and the Sunnah is an innovator, such as the Rāfiḍah, the Jahmiyyah, the Khawārij, the Qadariyyah, the Murji'ah, the Mu'tazilah, the Karrāmiyyah, the Kullābiyyah and those similar to them. These are sects of misguidance and parties of innovation [in a general

³⁰⁹ Abū Dawūd, no. 4691.

³¹⁰ Abū Dawūd, no. 4607 / al-Nasā'i, no. 1578: *'...every newly-invented matter is an innovation...'*

sense; including all of their branches. The author did not mention the Ashā'irah and the Māturīdīyah specifically, indicating perhaps that he did not consider them from amongst the sects of misguidance and innovation, categorically; even though he spoke harshly of the Ashā'irah in his other books such as *Tahrim al-Nazar*. Therefore, it may be understood that his critique, including his harsh words, regarding the Ashā'irah is more specific and is directed at particular opinions and methods of theirs. This ties in with what was mentioned earlier with regards to their two opinions regarding the Attributes of Allāh; one opinion being rejected by the Ḥanābilah while they both agree on the other (i.e. tafwīḍ or general ta'wil). **May Allāh grant us refuge from them.**

CONCERNING TAQLĪD AND IJTIHĀD

وَأَمَّا النَّسَبُ إِلَى إِمَامٍ فِي فُرُوعِ الدِّينِ كَالطَّوَائِفِ الْأَرْبَعِ فَلَيْسَ بِمَذْمُومٍ، فَإِنَّ الْإِخْتِلَافَ
فِي الْفُرُوعِ رَحْمَةٌ، وَالْمُخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ مَحْمُودُونَ فِي اخْتِلَافِهِمْ، مُتَابُونَ فِي اجْتِهَادِهِمْ،
وَإِخْتِلَافُهُمْ رَحْمَةٌ وَاسِعَةٌ، وَإِتِّفَاقُهُمْ حُجَّةٌ قَاطِعَةٌ.

As for ascribing oneself to an imām in the subsidiary issues of religion, such as the four madhhāhib, then this is not something blameworthy. For indeed, the differing in the subsidiary issues of religion is a mercy and those who differ in it, are praiseworthy in their differing; and they will be rewarded for their ijtiḥād. Their differing is a vast mercy and their agreement is a decisive proof.

Commentary: Concerning Taqlid and Ijtihad

As for ascribing oneself to an imām in the subsidiary issues of Religion [meaning, issues of fiqh], **such as the four Madhāhib** [by referring to oneself as Ḥanbalī, Mālikī, Shāfi‘ī or Ḥanafī], **then this is not something blameworthy** [and the words of the author indicate something that is more general than taqlīd for a mujtahid can also ascribe himself to a particular madhhab, always agreeing in his ijtiḥād with the positions of the scholars of that madhhab. This is what al-Suyūṭī mentions about himself, saying: ‘I never followed al-Shāfi‘ī, but whenever I did ijtiḥād I reached the same conclusion (as him)’]. **For indeed, the differing in the subsidiary issues of religion is a mercy and those who differ in it, are praiseworthy in their differing** [meaning, it is not the actual differing between the scholars that is praiseworthy, but it is the reaching of different opinions through their ijtiḥād that is praiseworthy and they will be rewarded even if they were wrong.]; **and they will be rewarded for their ijtiḥād. Their differing is a vast mercy and their agreement is a decisive proof.**

CLOSING REMARKS

نَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ أَنْ يَعْصِمَنَا مِنَ الْبِدْعِ وَالْفِتْنَةِ، وَيُحْيِيَنَا عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ وَالسُّنَّةِ، وَيَجْعَلَنَا مِنْ
بَشِيعَةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي الْحَيَاةِ، وَيُخَسِّرَنَا فِي زُمْرَتِهِ بَعْدَ الْمَمَاتِ
بِرَحْمَتِهِ وَقَضَائِهِ آمِينَ.

We ask Allāh that he protects us from innovation and trials and that He causes us to live upon Islām and the Sunnah. And that He makes us from among those who strictly follow the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ when alive and that He resurrects us in his company after death, through His *Rahmah* and His *Faql*. Āmin.

وَهَذَا آخِرُ الْمُعْتَقِدِ. وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَحْدَهُ، وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ
وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا.

This is the end of the 'aqidaḥ. All Praise is due to Allāh alone, and may Allāh's peace and blessing be upon our leader Muḥammad, his family and his Companions.



This was written by one in need of the pardon of his Lord al-Ghanī,
Muwaffaq al-Dīn, Yūsuf b. Šādiq al-Ḥanbalī, and it was finished on the
night of the 1st of the month of Rajab, 1441AH/February 25, 2020.

And all praise is due to Allāh.

May the peace and blessing of Allāh be upon our master Muḥammad
and his followers and companions.



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